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EDITED BY

REV. JOHN TELFORD, B.A.

WESLEY'S VETERANS

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PREFACE

Dr. Parker once paid a great tribute to the humbler instruments of the Evangelical Revival, when addressing a meeting in the North of England: 'Thank God for the great Methodist pulpit! When I am outworn and helpless I take down a volume of *The Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, and I am soon inspired and encouraged.' Mr. Spurgeon also found inspiration in these artless records of the triumphs of divine grace. In another quarter we have evidence of the estimate formed of these devoted itinerants. The Bishop of Birmingham recommends all candidates for ordination to learn their art at the feet of Wesley's heroic labourers. The stories appeal not only to preachers, but to all who can appreciate courage and devotion to duty. It is long since Southey bore witness that John Nelson, the Birstall stonemason, 'had as high a spirit and as brave a heart as ever Englishman was blessed with.' Wesley could never have fulfilled his mission without the band of preachers whom Providence provided for him against his will. He soon found that the Spirit of God which had strangely warmed his own heart and touched his own lips had

bestowed the same grace on these homely men of the people. They became his best friends and his noblest colleagues. The first Sir Robert Peel once asked Wesley to breakfast during a Lancashire Conference. He consented on condition that he might bring some of his children with him. He appeared at the appointed hour with thirty-six of his itinerants.

Thomas Jackson collected thirty-seven Lives of Early Methodist Preachers into three volumes in 1837–8. From these a selection is here given, with a few notes, which throw light on the records. They took shape under Wesley's own eye, being written at his request for the monthly magazine which he started in 1778. On its cover for February, 1779, we read: 'I have been lately desired to prefix to each of the numbers the head of one of our preachers. To this I purpose to add (immediately before the Letters) some account of the more remarkable circumstances of his life.' Peter Jaco's autobiography and portrait had already appeared in November, 1778. The autobiographies are marked by the twin graces of artless simplicity and sincere conviction, and they are spiritual records that the Church will never allow to slip out of sight. Their interest is unfailing. The Rev. George Jackson draws telling illustrations in his volume *The Fact of Conversion*, from this 'great arsenal of facts.' Still more striking use is made of the Lives by Professor Caldecott in a paper read before the Aristotelian Society in February, 1908. It is entitled 'The Religious Sentiment: an Inductive Inquiry' (*Proceedings of the Aristotelian*

Society, vol. viii.). He says the thirty-four narratives 'offer good material in various ways: they were men of our own kin; they lived at a period which enables us to reconstruct their environment; they were capable of self-observation; they were able to describe their observations; and in some important points there is corroboration of what they record.' Professor Caldecott refers to the spirit of gratitude which runs through the Lives, to their prevailing hopefulness, and the permanent feeling of reverence and awe. In those rough times the 'native passions' of young Cornishmen, Yorkshiremen, and Scotchmen were 'neither weak nor undeveloped.' They had seen themselves in God's light, and this led to poignant distress, from which they emerged at last into a peace which bore them through all the trials of their after-life. 'After the days of conflict and vicissitude had passed, we see neither unrest nor morbidity, but stability and the concreteness of efficiency and health and well-being.' 'They worked by night and by day for periods of thirty, forty, even fifty years, in circumstances in which encouraging results had frequently little balance over fierce opposition and bitter disappointments.' They lived well and they died well. Such stories of conversion can never grow old-fashioned.

The Rev. Owen S. Watkins has pointed out in his fascinating *Soldiers and Preachers Too* that more than a fourth of the Lives in Thomas Jackson's volumes were those of ex-soldiers. John Haime and Sampson Staniforth are the most famous of the fighting evangelists, and their stories, with the memorable experiences in the battles

of Dettingen and Fontenoy, take the first place in this selection. Thomas Mitchell had his taste of arms in 1745, and then became a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Christopher Hopper was a mighty preacher; Thomas Olivers lives among us by a hymn and a tune which promise to be immortal. The five old brothers in arms stand shoulder to shoulder in the first volume. The second embalms the memory of a not less memorable company: Peter Jaco, Duncan Wright, Thomas Hanby, Alexander Mather, John Murlin, George Shadford, Richard Whatcoat, and George Story. May a double portion of their spirit rest upon their Master's servants in all the churches! Their heroic constancy and devotion were never more needed at home and abroad by all the soldiers of Jesus Christ.

JOHN TELFORD.

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Wesley's Veterans

VOL. I

JOHN HAIME[1]

I WAS born at Shaftesbury, Dorsetshire, in 1710.[2] My father followed gardening, and brought me up to the same employment for several years; but I did not like it, and longed for some business that would allow me more liberty. In the meantime, I was very undutiful to my parents, and much given to cursing, swearing, lying, and Sabbath-breaking: but I was not easy in these ungodly practices, being often afraid that the devil would carry me away.

I was then placed with my uncle to learn to make buttons. I liked this well at first, but was soon tired of it. However, I stayed out the year; but my uncle then removing to Blandford,

[1] From *The Arminian Magazine*, April, May, June, 1780.

[2] The Rev. H. Hopkinson found from the registers that 'John Haymes' was baptized in Holy Trinity Church, Shaftesbury, by S. Phillips, Rector, February 18, 1708. In other entries the spelling is 'Hayme.'

I was out of business. I wrought in many places, but stayed in none ; being like the troubled sea, that cannot rest. After some time I went to my uncle at Blandford, and wrought with him about a quarter of a year. But still I found no satisfaction in anything, neither in working, eating, drinking, nor sleeping ; though neither I myself, nor any of my acquaintance, could imagine what was the matter with me.

Some time after, as I was working alone, the devil broke in upon me with reasonings concerning the being of a God, till my senses were almost gone. He then so strongly tempted me to blaspheme God, that I could not withstand. He then told me, ' Thou art inevitably damned ' ; and I readily believed him, for I thought, 'Though I have not cursed God outwardly, yet He looketh at the heart.' This consideration made me sink into despair, as a stone in the mighty waters.

I now began to wander about at the river-side, and through woods and solitary places, looking up to heaven with many times a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. I thought every one happy but myself, the devil continually telling me there was no mercy for me. Yet I thought it was hard to be banished for ever from the presence of a merciful God. I cried to Him for help, but I found no relief : it seemed to be all in vain ; so I said, like the men of Judah, ' There is no hope ' ; and then gave the reins to my evil desires, not caring which end went foremost, but giving myself up again to wicked company and all their evil ways.

If at any time I grew uneasy again, I stifled it

by drinking, swearing, card-playing, lewdness, and the like works of darkness, which I then pursued with all greediness. I was hastening on to eternal destruction, when the great tremendous God met me as a lion in the way; and His Holy Spirit, whom I had been so long grieving, returned with greater force than ever. I had no rest day or night. I was afraid to go to bed, lest the devil should fetch me away before morning. I was afraid to shut my eyes, lest I should awake in hell. I was terrified when asleep, sometimes dreaming that many devils were in the room, ready to take me away; sometimes, that the world was at an end, and that I was not ready to appear before the Judge of quick and dead. At other times I thought I saw the world on fire, and the wicked left to burn therein, with myself among them; and when I awoke, my senses were almost gone.

I was often on the point of destroying myself; and was stopped I know not how. Then did I weep bitterly; I mourned like a dove; I chattered like a swallow. But I thought, 'Though my anguish is very great, it is not like those that are lifting up their eyes in torments.' Then, for a few moments, I felt thankfulness to God. But still the thoughts of death and judgement followed me closely for upwards of two years, till all my bodily strength was gone. Returning home one day, and sitting down in a chair, my mother, observing my pale look and low voice, asked, 'What is the matter with you?' but I durst not tell her; so I turned it off.

One night as I was going to bed I durst not

lie down without prayer. So, falling upon my knees, I began to consider, 'What can I pray for? I have neither the will nor the power to do anything good.' Then it darted into my mind, 'I will not pray, neither will I be beholden to God for mercy.' I arose from my knees without prayer, and laid me down; but not in peace. I never had such a night before. I was as if my very body had been in a fire; and I had a hell in my conscience. I was thoroughly persuaded the devil was in the room; and I fully expected, every moment, that he would be let loose upon me. I judged myself to be one of the worst creatures that God ever made. I thought I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy. Yet all this time I kept to the church, though I was often afraid to go there, lest the church or the tower should fall upon me.

In spring I was employed by a tanner to go with his carriage and fetch dried bark. As I was returning by myself, I was violently tempted to blaspheme, yea, and to hate God: at length, having a stick in my hand, I threw it toward heaven against God, with the utmost enmity. Immediately I saw in the clear element a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown. It flew at me, and went just over my head. Then it went about forty yards, lighted on the ground, and stood staring upon me. This was in a clear day, about twelve o'clock. I strove to pray, but I could not. At length God opened my mouth. I hastened home, praying all the way, and earnestly resolving to sin no more. But I soon forgot my resolution, and

multiplied my sins as the sands on the sea-shore.

To complete all, I enlisted myself a soldier in the Queen's regiment of dragoons. When we marched for Gloucester, on Christmas Day in the morning, 1739, the thoughts of parting with all my friends, my wife, and children were ready to break my heart. My sins likewise came all to my remembrance, and my trouble increased night and day. Nevertheless, when I became acquainted with my comrades, I soon returned as a dog to the vomit. Yet God soon renewed my good desires. I began to read and pray, and to go to church every day. But frequently I was so tempted there, that it was as much as I could do to avoid blaspheming aloud. Satan suggested, 'Curse him! curse him!' perhaps a hundred times. My heart as often replied, 'No! no! no!' Then he suggested, 'Thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost.' But I still cried unto God, though the deep waters flowed over me, and despair closed me in on every side.

Soon after we marched to camp at King's Clear, in Hampshire. Thence we removed to winter quarters at Farringdon. I was still deeply miserable through sin, but not conqueror over it. This was still my language:

> Here I repent, and sin again;
> Now I revive, and now am slain!
> Slain with the same unhappy dart,
> Which, O! too often wounds my heart!

After this I was quartered at Highworth, in Wiltshire. Among many old books which were

here, I found one entitled, *Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners.* I read it with the utmost attention, and found his case almost resembled my own. Having, soon after, orders to march for Scotland, we marched the first day to Banbury, where I found again, in a bookseller's shop, *Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners.* I bought it, and thought it the best book I ever saw; and again I felt some hopes of mercy. In every town where we stayed I went to church: but I did not hear what I wanted: 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.'

Being come to Alnwick, Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. And the hand of the Lord came upon me with such weight as made me roar for very anguish of spirit. I could truly say, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit.' Many times I stopped in the street, afraid to go one step farther, lest I should step into hell. Then I cried unto the Lord, and said, 'Why hast Thou set me as a mark? Let loose Thy hand, and cut me off, that I sin no more against Thee.' I said, 'Is Thy mercy clean gone for ever? And must I perish at last? Save, Lord, or I perish!' But there was no answer; so all hope was cut off.

I now read, and fasted, and went to church, and prayed seven times a day. One day, as I walked by the Tweed side, I cried aloud, being all athirst for God, 'O that Thou wouldst hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before Thee!' The Lord heard: He sent a gracious answer:

He lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away my sorrow and fear and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free; and had I had any to guide me, I need never more have come into bondage. But I was so ignorant, I thought I should know war no more. I began to be at ease in Sion, and forgot to watch and pray, till God laid His hand upon me again. I then again went mourning all the day long; till one Sunday, as I was going to church, I stood still like a condemned criminal before his judge, and said, 'Lord, what am I going to church for? I have nothing to bring or offer Thee but sin and a deceitful heart.' I had no sooner spoken, than my heart melted within me and I cried earnestly to Him for mercy. But suddenly something ran through my veins cold as ice. I was afraid to stay, and arose and left the room; but reflecting that God is above the devil, I went in again. I fell down before the Lord, with bitter cries and tears, till my strength failed me, and it was with difficulty I could walk out of the room.

The next morning, as I was going to water my horse, just as he entered the river, in a moment, I felt the love of God flowing into my soul. Instantly all pain and sorrow fled away. No fear of hell or the devil was left; but love to God and all mankind now filled my ravished soul. As the people with whom I quartered had often the Bible and other good books in their hands, I told them what God had done for my soul; but they understood me not. However, I doubted

not but my comrade would rejoice with me, being counted a religious man. But I was disappointed again: his answer was, 'Take care; for Satan can transform himself into an angel of light.' Finding none who were able to give me any instruction or direction, I soon got into unprofitable reasonings, which damped my fervour; so that in a little time I was again in heaviness.

Soon after I was sent with the camp-equipage to London. The next day I marched for Leith. I had scarcely set out, when God was pleased to reveal Himself in a most comfortable manner to my soul; and my comfort increased all the day, so that I hardly knew how I went. We waited for the ship seven days. During this time I was off my watch again: so that before we sailed I was weak and like another man. For two days we had pleasant weather; but on the third the wind suddenly arose, attended with furious rain. The seas frequently covered the ship, and, in the midst of our distress, broke in the hatches. I was not, as Jonah, 'asleep in the sides of the ship,' but was just at my wits' end. I uttered a lifeless prayer with many tears, expecting every moment the sea to be my grave. I was grieved that I had so abused the goodness of God, and troubled beyond expression. The storm lasted two nights: then God was pleased to still the winds and seas.

At our arrival in London I was somewhat refreshed in spirit, being truly thankful that I was out of hell. But I was soon in the depth of despair again, afraid of dropping into hell every

moment. Soon after I went to hear Mr. Cennick [1] (then one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers), at Deptford. Coming back, I told him the distress of my soul. He said, 'The work of the devil is upon you'; and then rode away. It was of the tender mercies of God that I did not put an end to my life. I cried, 'O Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear.'

Yet I thought, If I must be damned myself, I will do what I can that others may be saved. So I began to reprove open sin, whenever I saw or heard it; and to warn the ungodly that if they did not repent they would surely perish. But if I found any that were weary and heavy-laden, I told them to wait upon the Lord, and He would renew their strength. Yet I found no strength myself, till reading one day in what manner God manifested Himself to Mr. Cennick, I cried out, 'Lord, if there be any mercy for me, reveal it to me!' I was answered by so strong an impression on my heart as left me without a doubt, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.' Immediately my soul melted within me, and I was filled with joy unspeakable.

Having joined my regiment again, we marched to Colchester. Here I found much peace, and communion with God, which humbled me to the dust. Our next remove was to Brentford, where I had the happiness of hearing Mr. Charles Wesley preach.[2] When the service was over,

[1] John Cennick, the hymn-writer, formerly one of Wesley's preachers.

[2] Charles Wesley's *Journal* for this period has not been preserved.

I had a great desire of speaking to him, but knew not how to be so bold. Yet, taking courage, I ventured to tell him my situation of mind. He gave me much encouragement, and bade me go on and not fear, neither be dismayed at any temptation. His words sunk deep, and were a great blessing to me for several years.

Soon after, we had an order to march for Flanders. This threw me into fresh reasoning. The thought of leaving my country, and the danger ensuing by sea and land, sat heavily upon my spirit. I soon lost my peace—nay, and my hope too. I knew I had 'tasted of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come.' Yet this gave me no comfort—nay, it aggravated my sorrow, to think of losing all that God had done for me. But the more I struggled the deeper I sunk, till I was quite swallowed up of sorrow. And though I cried unto God, yea, with strong cries and tears, yet for a long time I had no comfortable answer.

For a long time I was so dejected and confused, that I had no heart to keep a regular account of anything. In this state I was when we embarked for Flanders, in June, 1742, and as long as we stayed there. It was on February 18, 1743, that we began our march from Ghent to Germany. When I came to my quarters, my heart was ready to break, thinking I was upon the very brink of hell. We halted six days, and then marched again. The day following, as soon as I had mounted my horse, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins; and felt 'where

the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' This I enjoyed about three weeks, but then lost it by grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I then walked about much cast down, and knew not what to do. But, April 22, the Lord showed me that I did not live as became the gospel of Christ: I was greatly ashamed before God. In the evening, as I was walking in the fields with a heavy heart, I prayed earnestly to God that He would smite the rock, and cause the waters to flow. He answered my prayer. My head was as waters, and my eyes as a fountain of tears. I wept, I sang; I had such a sense of the love of God as surpasses all description. Well might Solomon say, 'Love is strong as death.' Now I saw I had 'a right to the tree of life'; and I knew if I then put off the body, I should enter into eternal life.

We now marched on through a pleasant country; and my soul was full of peace. I did speak, and not spare, with little interruption. Only at one time, when I was speaking of the goodness of God, one of our officers (and one that was accounted a very religious man!) told me, 'You deserve to be cut in pieces, and to be given to the devil.' But I was enabled (blessed be God) to love, pity, and pray for him.

After a long and tiresome march, we arrived at Dettingen. Here we lay in camp for some time, very near the French; only the river Main ran between us. June 16,[1] I was ordered out on the grand guard with all expedition. When we came to the place appointed, I saw many

[1] New Style, June 27.

of the French army marching on the other side of the river. It was not long before I heard the report of a French cannon. I said, 'We shall have a battle to-day'; but my comrades did not believe me. Presently I heard another, and then a third: the ball came along by us. Many of the French had crossed the river, and many more were in full march towards it. We had orders to return with all speed. The firing increased very fast: and several were killed, or wounded; some by the cannon-balls, some by the limbs of the trees which the balls cut off. Meantime we marched on one side of the river; part of the French army on the other. The battle was soon joined with small arms as well as cannon, on both sides. It was very bloody: thousands, on each side, were sent to their long home. I had no sooner joined the regiment than my left-hand man was shot dead. I cried to God, and said, 'In Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded.' My heart was filled with love, peace, and joy, more than tongue can express. I was in a new world. I could truly say, 'Unto you that believe He is precious.' I stood the fire of the enemy seven hours. And when the battle was over I was sent out with a party of men to find the baggage-wagons, but returned without success. In the meanwhile the army was gone, and I knew not which way. I went to the field where the battle was fought, but such a scene of human misery did I never behold! It was enough to melt the most obdurate heart. I knew not now which way to take, being afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy. But as

it began to rain hard, I set out, though not knowing where to go; till hearing the beat of the drum, I went towards it, and soon rejoined the army. But I could not find the tent which I belonged to, nor persuade them to take me in at any other. So, being very wet and much fatigued, I wrapped myself up in my cloak, and lay down and fell asleep. And though it still rained upon me, and the water ran under me, I had as sweet a night's rest as ever I had in my life.

We had now to return from Germany to Flanders, to take up our winter quarters. In our march, we were some time near the river Main. Twenty miles from the field of battle, we saw the dead men lie in the river, and on the bank, as dung upon the earth. Many of the French, attempting to pass the river after we had broken down the bridge, were drowned, and many cast upon the banks, where there was none to bury them.

Being in Ghent, I went one Sunday morning to the English church at the usual time. But neither minister nor people came. As I was walking in the church, two men belonging to the train came in, John Evans and Pitman Stag. One of them said, 'The people are long in coming.' I said, 'Yet they think, however they live, of going to heaven when they die. But most of them, I fear, will be sadly disappointed.' They stared at me, and asked me what I meant. I told them, 'Nothing unholy can dwell with a holy God.' We had a little more talk, and appointed to meet in the evening. I found John Evans a strict Pharisee, 'doing justly, and loving

mercy,' but knowing nothing of 'walking humbly with his God.' But the cry of Pitman Stag was, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' We took a room without delay, and met every night to pray and read the Holy Scriptures. In a little time we were as speckled birds, as 'men wondered at.' But some began to listen under the window, and soon after desired to meet with us. Our meetings were soon sweeter than our food; and I found therein such an enlargement of soul, and such an increase of spiritual knowledge, that I resolved to go, come life or come death.

We had now twelve joined together, several of whom had already found peace with God: the others were earnestly following after it; and it was not long before they attained. Hereby new love and zeal were kindled in us all; and although Satan assaulted us various ways, yet were we enabled to discern all his wiles, and to withstand all his power. Several of them are now safely landed on the blissful shore of a glorious immortality; where, as a weather-beaten barque worn out with storms, may I, at last, happily arrive, and find the children whom God has been graciously pleased to give me through the word of His power.

Feeling I wanted help both from God and man, I wrote to Mr. Wesley,[1] who sent me a speedy answer, as follows:

[1] See Wesley's *Journal*, February 1,1744. Haime wrote, 'I desire, for the sake of Him whom we follow after, that you would send us some instructions how to proceed in our little Society. God is become a mouth to me, and has blessed even my word to some of their souls. All praise, and glory, and honour, be unto Him and to the Lamb for ever and ever.'

'It is a great blessing, whereof God has already made you a partaker: but if you continue waiting upon Him, you shall see greater things than these. This is only the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, which He will set up in your heart. There is yet behind the fullness of the mind that was in Christ; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is but a little thing that men should be against you, while you know that God is on your side. If He give you any companion in the narrow way, it is well; and it is well if He do not. So much the more will He teach and strengthen you by Himself: He will strengthen you in the secret of your heart; and by-and-by He will raise up, as it were, out of the dust, those who shall say, "Come, and let us magnify His name together." But by all means miss no opportunity. Speak and spare not; declare what God has done for your soul; regard not worldly prudence; be not ashamed of Christ, or of His word, or of His servants; speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation: and all things shall work together for good, until the work of God is perfect in your soul.'

One night after our meeting I told the people we should have the room full before we left the city. We soon increased to about twenty members; and love increased so, that shame and fear vanished away. Our singing was heard afar off, and we regarded not those who made no account of our labours. Such was the increase of our faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, that we had no barren meetings. Such was our love to each other, that even the sight of

each other filled our hearts with divine consolation. And as love increased among us, so did convictions among others; and in a little time we had a large society. So that now (as I had told them before) the room was too small to hold the people.[1]

May 1, 1744, we marched from Ghent, and encamped near Brussels. Our camp lay to the side of a hill: we set up our standing on a hill just opposite.[2] We were easily heard by the soldiers in the camp, who soon began to 'fly as a cloud, and as doves to the windows.' Here I gathered together my scattered sheep and lambs. They were the joy of my heart; and I trust to find them again among that 'great multitude that no man can number.' O what a work did God put into my hands! And who is sufficient for these things? But God had given me such a faith, that had I continued steadfast in the grace of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor any creature, could have hindered my growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ unto my dying hour.

I took great delight in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. I read it over and over, and prayed much for faith. This was first in the

[1] Wesley says in his *Journal*, April 4, 1753: 'I made an end of examining the Society at Manchester, among whom were seventeen of the Dragoons. It is remarkable that these were in the same regiment with John Haime, in Flanders; but they utterly despised both him and his Master, till they removed to Manchester. Here it was that one and another dropped in, he scarce knew why, to hear the preaching. And they now are a pattern of seriousness, zeal, and all holy conversation.'

[2] Eight days later they moved to Ask.

day and last at night in my mind; and I had no more doubt of the promises contained therein than if God had called to me from heaven, and said, 'This is My word, and it shall stand for ever.' When I began preaching, I did not understand one text in the Bible, so as to speak from it in (what is called) a regular manner; yet I never wanted either matter or words. So hath God, in all ages, 'chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.' I usually had a thousand hearers, officers, common soldiers, and others. Was there ever so great a work before, in so abandoned an army? But we can only say, There is nothing too hard for God! He worketh what, and by whom, He pleaseth.

I was now put to a stand. I had so much duty to do, the society to take care of, and to preach four or five times a day, that it was more than I could well perform. But God soon took care for this also. I looked for no favour from man: I wanted nothing from man: I feared nothing: God did so increase my love and zeal. Light and heat filled my soul, and it was my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father. I cried earnestly to Him to clear my way and remove all hindrances. Glory be to His name! He did so: for two years after this time I was entirely at my liberty. I found means of hiring others to do my duty, which proved an unspeakable advantage. The work was great before; but we soon found a greater increase of it than ever. If Christianity consist in love and obedience to God, and love to all men, friends

and enemies, we had now got a Christian society : we had the good land in possession. But this was not enough : still there was an earnest cry in our souls for all the mind that was in Christ, as there was in David for 'the water of the well at Bethlehem.'

Our general method was, as soon as we were settled in any camp, to build a tabernacle, containing two, three, or four rooms, as we saw convenient. One day three officers came to see our chapel, as they called it. They asked many questions : one in particular asked me what I preached. I answered, 'I preach against swearing, whoring, and drunkenness ; and exhort men to repent of all their sins, that they may not perish.' He began swearing horribly, and said, if it were in his power, he would have me whipped to death. I told him, 'Sir, you have a commission over men ; but I have a commission from God to tell you, you must either repent of your sins, or perish everlastingly.' He went away, and I went on, being never better than when I was preaching or at prayer. For the Lord gave such a blessing to His word, that I thought every discourse lost under which no one was either convinced or converted to God.

We had now three hundred in the society, and six preachers, besides myself. It was therefore no wonder that many of the officers and chaplains endeavoured to stop the work. But it was altogether lost labour. He that sitteth in heaven laughed them to scorn. And I doubt not but He would have given me strength to suffer death, rather than have given them up.

It was reported by many that I was utterly distracted. Others endeavoured to incense the field-marshal against me. I was examined several times; but, blessed be God! He stood by me, and encouraged me to go on, to speak, and not to hold my peace; neither did He suffer any man to set upon me to hurt me. And so great were my love and joy in believing, that they carried me above all those things which would otherwise have been grievous to flesh and blood; so that all was pleasant to me:

> The winter's night and summer's day
> Fled imperceptibly away.

I frequently walked between twenty and thirty miles a day; and preached five-and-thirty times in the space of seven days.[1] So great was my love to God, and to the souls which He had purchased with His own blood. Many times I have forgotten to take my refreshment for ten hours together. I had at this time three armies against me: the French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils. But I feared them not; for my life was hid with Christ in God. He supported me through all; and I trust He will be my God and my guide even unto death.

[1] 'One of those times a soldier who was present called to his comrades to come away, and not hear that fool any longer. But it pleased God to send the word spoken to his heart; so that he roared out, in the bitterness of his soul, for a considerable time: and then He who never fails them that seek Him turned his heaviness into joy. He is now never so happy as when he is proclaiming the loving-kindness of God his Saviour.'—Wesley's *Journal*, November 4, 1744.

While the work of God thus flourished among the English, He visited also the Hanoverian army. A few of them began to meet together, and their number increased daily. But they were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severely punished, the rest did not dare to disobey. It is clear the devil and the world will suffer any man to be anything but a real Christian!

My present comrade was an extremely wicked man. He came home one day, cursing and swearing that he had lost his money. He searched for it, and, after some time, found it. He threw it on the table, and said, 'There is my ducat; but no thanks to God, any more than to the devil.' I wrote down the words, and complained to our commanding officer. After a few days he was tried by a court-martial. The officer asked what I had to say against him. I gave him the words in writing. When he had read them, he asked me if I were not ashamed to take account of such a matter as this. I answered, 'No, sir: if I had heard such words spoken against His Majesty King George, would not you have counted me a villain if I had concealed them?' His mouth was stopped, and the man cried for pardon. The captain told him he was worthy of death by the law of God and man; and asked me what I desired to have done. I answered, I desired only to be parted from him, and I hoped he would repent. Orders were given that we should be parted. This also was matter of great thankfulness.

From camp we removed to our winter quarters at Bruges.[1] Here we had a lively society; but our preaching-room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship, called the English church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer. I went to his house, and begged to have leave to speak to him. He told me, if I had business with him, I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him I had the liberty of speaking to the Duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted. I said, 'Please your honour, I come to beg a great favour: that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the wrath to come.' He was very angry, and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks. He asked, 'But how came you to preach?' I said, 'The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow sinners to repentance.' He said, 'Then you must restrain that Spirit.' I told him, 'I would die first.' He said, 'You are in my hand,' and turned away in a great rage.

I cried to the Lord for more faith, that I might never deny Him, whatsoever I was called to suffer, but might own Him before men and devils; and very soon after, God removed this hindrance out of the way: General Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and General Ponsonby took his place. I went to his house, and

[1] See his letter to Wesley, *Journal*, November 4, 1744: 'Our dear Lord is in the midst of us. Many times the tears run down every face, and joy reigns in every heart.'

was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, 'I come to beg your honour will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God.' He asked, 'What religion are you of?' I answered, 'Of the Church of England.' 'Then,' said he, 'you shall have it.' I went to the clerk for the keys; but he said the chaplains forbade it, and I should not have them. The general then gave me an order under his own hand, so that they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town,—'Preaching every day, at two o'clock, in the English church.' And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townsfolk.

We had some good singers among us, and one in particular, who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear the word. One Sunday the clerk gave out a psalm: it was sung in a hymn tune; and sung so well, that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed to go all together to church every Sunday. On the next Sunday we began; and when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers, singing together with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such a life to the ordinance that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

The spring following we took the field again:

and on May 11, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. Some days before, one of our brethren, standing at his tent-door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand[1]; and, when he went into the field of battle, declared, 'I am going to rest in the bosom of Jesus.' Indeed, this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them His mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight as made the officers, as well as soldiers, amazed. When wounded, some cried out, 'I am going to my Beloved.' Others, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' And many that were not wounded earnestly desired 'to be dissolved and to be with Christ.' When W. Clements had his arm broken by a musket-ball, they would have carried him out of the battle; but he said, 'No; I have an arm left to hold my sword: I will not go yet.' When a second shot broke his other arm, he said, 'I am as happy as I can be out of paradise.'[2] John Evans, having both his legs taken off by a cannon-ball, was laid across a cannon to die: where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips.

For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for about seven hours. But I told my comrades, 'The French have no ball made that

[1] 'And was so filled with the love of God, that he danced before his comrades.'—See Haime's letter from Leare, near Antwerp, in Wesley's *Journal*, December 2, 1745.

[2] The following December he wrote to Wesley that after the second wound he had to quit the field. 'But I scarce knew whether I was on earth or in heaven. It was one of the sweetest days I ever enjoyed.'—Wesley's *Works*, xiii. 323.

will kill me this day.' After about seven hours, a cannon-ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, 'Haime, where is your God now?' I answered, 'Sir, He is here with me; and He will bring me out of this battle.' Presently a cannon-ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, 'Haime is gone!' But I replied, 'He is not gone yet.' I soon disengaged myself, and walked on, praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse: but that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way lay multitudes of bleeding, groaning, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace; but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me: I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field, I met one of our brethren with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled, and said, 'Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound.' I asked, 'Have you got Christ in your heart?' He said, 'I have; and I have had Him all this day.[1] I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of the power of God; but I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies!' Among the dead

[1] The letter in Wesley's *Journal*, December 2, 1745, here adds: 'Blessed be God that I ever saw your face.' Haime's comment is, 'Lord, what am I that I should be counted worthy to set my hand to the gospel plough! Lord, humble me, and lay me in the dust!'

there were great plenty of watches and of gold and silver. One asked me, 'Will not you get something?' I answered, 'No; I have got Christ. I will have no plunder.'

But the greatest loss I sustained was that of my fellow labourers. William Clements[1] was sent to the hospital. John Evans, brothers Bishop and Greenwood, were killed in the battle. Two others, who used to speak boldly, fell into Antinomianism. So I was left alone: but I was persuaded this also was for my good. And seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many waxing cold, it added wings to my devotion. And my faith grew daily, as a tree planted by the water-side.[2]

One of these Antinomian preachers professed to be always happy, but was frequently drunk twice a day. One Sunday, when I was five or six miles off, he took an opportunity of venting his devilish opinions. One hasted after me, and begged me to return. I did so; but the mischief was done. He had convinced many

[1] See letter from John Evans, describing his conversion and the work in the army, in Wesley's *Journal*, December 3, 1744, and more fully, *Arminian Magazine*, 1778, p. 277.

[2] When Wesley saw the state of the camp at Newcastle and offered to do Christian work among the soldiers, he shows that religion would not spoil them as servants of their country. 'Did those who feared God behave as cowards at Fontenoy? Did J. H(aime), the dragoon, betray any cowardice, before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did W. Clements, when he received the first ball in his left and the second in his right arm? Or John Evans, when the cannon-ball took off both his legs? Did he not call all about him, as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honour the king? as one who feared nothing but lest his last breath should be spent in vain.'—*Journal*, October 26, 1745.

that we had nothing to do with the law, either before or after our conversion. When I came in, the people looked greatly confused: I perceived there was a great rent in the society; and, after preaching and prayer, said, 'You that are for the old doctrine, which you have heard from the beginning, follow me.' Out of the three hundred, I lost about fifty; but the Lord soon gave me fifty more. The two Antinomians set up for themselves, until lying, drunkenness, and many other sins destroyed both preachers and people, all but a few that came back to their brethren.

We had no sacrament administered in the army for a long season. I was greatly troubled, and complained aloud in the open camp of the neglect. The chaplains were exceedingly displeased; but the Duke of Cumberland, hearing of it, ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day, to one regiment or the other.

The duke, hearing many complaints of me, inquired who I was; if I did my duty, if I would fight, and if I prayed for a blessing on the king and his arms. They told his royal highness I did all this as well as any man in the regiment. He asked, 'Then what have you to say against him?' They said, 'Why, he prays and preaches so much, that there is no rest for him.' Afterwards the duke talked with me himself, and asked me many questions. He seemed so well satisfied with my answers that he bade me 'go on'; and gave out a general order that I should preach anywhere, and no man should molest me.

I was preaching one day, when the duke, unknown, came to hear me. I that day desired the soldiers never to come there, or to any place of public worship, so as to neglect any duty. I exhorted them to be ready at all calls, and to obey those who had the rule over them ; and if called out to battle, to stand fast, yea, if needful, fight up to the knees in blood. I said, 'You fight for a good cause, and for a good king, and in defence of your country. And this is no way contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy ; when both you and I did our duty, and were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'

I had now for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man ; and for nearly three years I had known that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins. I had enjoyed the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all conditions : wet and weary, cold and hungry, I was happy ; finding a daily increase in faith and love. I had constant communion with the Father and the Son. It was my delight to do good to them that hated me, and to call all sinners to 'behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' But O ! 'how did the mighty fall, and the weapons of war perish ! ' April 6, 1746, I was off my watch, and fell by a grievous temptation.[1] It came

[1] See Wesley's *Journal*, August 27, 1746. Haime says : 'I was overcome by a great temptation. It came as quick as lightning. I know not if I was well in my senses ; but I

as quick as lightning: I knew not if I were in my senses; but I fell, and the Spirit of God departed from me. It was a great mercy that I did not fall into hell! Blessed be God for that word, 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' But it was twenty years before I found Him to be an Advocate for me with the Father again.

My fall was both gradual and instantaneous. I first grew negligent in watching and prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. I then indulged myself more and more; laying out upon my own appetite what I before gave to my poor brethren. I next began to indulge the lust of my eyes, to look at and covet pleasing things; till, by little and little, I became shorn of my strength, 'having left my former love.' For many years I had scrupled buying or selling the least thing on the Lord's day. The 6th of April was on a Sunday. That day I was at Antwerp for forage: several of my comrades desired me to buy them some things, which accordingly I did. I had an inward check, but I overruled it, and quickly after became a prey to the enemy. Instantly my condemnation was so great that I was on the point of destroying myself. God restrained me from this; but Satan was let loose, and followed me by day

fell. I rose the same moment, and called upon my offended God; and so I have done ever since. But, notwithstanding, His Spirit has departed from me. I have wounded my conscience exceedingly. I am fallen into the spirit of bondage and fear; and I often cry out:

'Who shall tell me if the strife
In heaven or hell shall end?'

and by night. The agony of my mind weighed down my body, and threw me into a bloody flux. I was carried to a hospital, just dropping into hell. But the Lord upheld me with an unseen hand, quivering over the great gulf.

Before my fall my sight was so strong that I could look steadfastly on the sun at noon-day. But after it I could not look a man in the face, nor bear to be in any company. Indeed, I thought myself far more fit for the society of devils than of men; everything was a burden to me, and grievous to be borne. The roads, the hedges, the trees, everything seemed cursed of God. Nature appeared void of God, and in the possession of the devil. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field all seemed in league against me. I had not one ray of hope, but a fearful looking-for of fiery indignation. Very frequently Judas was represented to me as hanging just before me. Had I been cut with knives from head to foot, I could not have been more sore in my flesh than I was in my spirit. How true is it, 'The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear!'

I clearly saw the unshaken faith, the peace, joy, and love which I had cast away, and felt the return of pride, anger, self-will, and every other devilish temper. And I knew, by melancholy experience, that my last state was worse than the first. I was one day drawn into the woods, lamenting my forlorn state, and on a sudden I began to weep bitterly. From weeping I fell to howling, like a wild beast, so that the

woods resounded. Yet could I say, notwithstanding my bitter cries, 'My stroke is heavier than my groaning.' Nevertheless, I could not say, 'Lord, have mercy upon me,' if I could have purchased heaven thereby.

So great was the displeasure of God against me, that He, in a great measure, took away the sight of my eyes. I could not see the sun for more than eight months: even in the clearest summer day, it always appeared to me like a mass of blood. At the same time I lost the use of my knees. I cannot describe what I felt. I could truly say, 'Thou hast sent fire into my bones.' I was often as hot as if I were burning to death: many times I looked to see if my clothes were set on fire. I have gone into a river to cool myself; but it was all the same. For what could quench the wrath of His indignation that was let loose upon me? At other times, in the midst of summer, I have been so cold that I knew not how to bear it. All the clothes I could put on had no effect, but my flesh shivered, and my very bones quaked. God grant, reader, thou and I may never feel how hot or how cold it is in hell!

I was afraid to pray; for I thought the die was cast, and my damnation sealed. So I thought, it availed not if all the saints upon earth, and all the angels in heaven, should intercede for me. I was angry at God, angry at myself, and angry at the devil. I thought I was possessed with more devils than Mary Magdalene. I cannot remember that I had one comfortable hope for seven years together. Only while I

was preaching to others my distress was a little abated. But some may inquire, What could move me to preach while I was in such a forlorn condition? They must ask of God for what I cannot tell: His ways herein are past my finding out.

In all my trials I have, by the grace of God, invariably kept to one point, preaching 'repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ': testifying that 'by grace are ye saved through faith': that 'now is the day of salvation,' and that this salvation is for all—that Christ 'tasted death for every one.' I always testified that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord'; and that if any, though ever so holy, 'draw back,' they will perish everlastingly. I continually expected this would be my lot; yet, after some years, I attempted again to pray. With this Satan was not well pleased; for one day, as I was walking alone, and faintly crying for mercy, suddenly such a hot blast of brimstone flashed in my face as almost took away my breath. And presently after, as I was walking, an invisible power struck up my heels, and threw me violently upon my face.

When we came to Holland, I had now and then a spark of hope. One Sunday I went to church, where the Lord's supper was to be administered. I had a great desire to partake of it; but the enemy came in like a flood to hinder me, pouring in temptations of every kind. I resisted him with my might, till, through the agony of my mind, the blood gushed out of my

mouth and nose. However, I was enabled to conquer, and to partake of the blessed elements. So I still waited on God in the way of His judgements, and He led me in a way I had not known.

Whatever my inward distress was, I always endeavoured to appear free among the people. And it pleased God to make me fruitful in the land of my affliction. He gave me favour in their sight, and many children were born unto the Lord. Indeed, I could speak but very little Dutch with regard to common things; but when we came to talk of the things of God, I could speak a great deal. And after I have been at prayer, many have told me they could understand almost every word I said. But what was this to me? I was miserable still, having no comfortable sense of the presence and favour of God.

I had heard of an old experienced Christian at Rotterdam. I went to see him; and found him in an upper room, furnished like that which the Shunammite prepared for Elisha. He looked at me, but did not speak one word. However, I told him a little of my experience. He looked earnestly at me, and began to speak and tell me all his heart. He said he had lived for several years in the favour and love of God, when, thinking himself stronger than he was, Satan got an advantage over him. The Holy Spirit departed from him: his strength was gone, and he knew not where to flee for refuge. For ten years sin held him in its iron bondage, and in inexpressible anguish and despair. But one day, as he was making his complaint to God, on a sudden, light

broke in; sorrow fled away, and his soul was like Amminadib.[1] The change was so great that he was utterly lost in wonder, love, and praise. He knew God had 'created a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him.' And he had now lived thirty years without one doubt of what God had wrought. This gave me considerable satisfaction; but it lasted only a short time.

When we were going, for winter quarters, into a town in Holland, I was sent thither before our troops. A gentleman sent for me, and asked if I knew John Haime. I said, 'I am the man.' He said, 'A gentlewoman in the town wants to speak with you.' I went to her house, and she bade me welcome. After a little conversation, she asked me, 'Do you believe that Christ died for all the world?' Upon my answering, 'I do,' she replied, 'I do not believe one word of it. But as you know He died for you, and I know He died for me, we will only talk of His love to poor sinners.' We were soon as well acquainted as if we had lived together many years, and her house became my home. I asked how many she had in family. She said, seven, beside herself. I asked, 'What is to become of all these, that you are so easy about them?' She said, 'The Lord will call them in His due time, if they belong to Him.' I asked, 'Shall we pray for them?' She said, 'Yes'; so I began that evening. In a few days the servant-maid was cut to the heart; next, one of her sons was convinced of sin, and soon after con-

[1] Canticles vi. 12.

verted to God. And before we left the town the whole family were athirst for salvation. When the time of our marching drew near, she was in great trouble; but there was no help: so we took our leave of each other, to meet no more till the morning of the resurrection.[1]

At another time I was quartered at Meerkirk, in Holland, at a young woman's whose father and mother were lately dead. She had many cattle, some of which died daily of the distemper; but she never murmured. I never before met with a woman so ready in the Scriptures. I could not mention any text but she would readily tell the meaning of it: so that it was no wonder she was thought by others, as well as by herself, to be a prime Christian. I was almost of the same mind at first; but when I had narrowly observed her, I was thoroughly convinced she was deceived, and judged it my duty to undeceive her. I told her, 'You are not born of God: you have not living faith.' She heard me with much composure of mind; but she did not believe me. I continued for three weeks pressing it upon her at all opportunities. And one evening the Lord made a few words which I spoke sharper than a two-edged sword. Conviction so fastened upon her heart that she was soon obliged to take to her bed. She lay about seven days in deep

[1] Haime sorely needed friends, but Sampson Staniforth tells Wesley, *Journal*, November 16, 1746: 'When we came over, we thought we should have had brother Haime with us, as formerly; but we were disappointed. At Villcar camp we lay so near the enemy, and were forced to mount so many guards, that we had hardly any time to ourselves, nor had John Haime time to meet with us.'

distress. She then had a comfortable hope ; and this strengthened her body for a few days. But then her convictions returned so heavily that she was obliged to take her bed again, in great agony of mind. The townspeople were alarmed, and ran in crowds to inquire what was the matter. What could distress her, who had enough of the world's wealth, and was so good a woman ? But they gave her no satisfaction. As soon as they were gone, she immediately called for me, and cried out, ' O John, I shall go to hell ; the devil will carry me away.' I said, ' No ! you shall not go to hell ! The Lord died for poor sinners.' She lay in this distress about ten days, and was brought to the gates of death. But the good Samaritan then passed by, poured wine and oil into her wounds, and healed both soul and body ; so that she broke out, 'Jehovah is my strength and my song. He is my salvation ! Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul.'

I now thought it would be a great blessing, both to herself and her neighbours, if she would pray with them. She agreed so to do. I commonly prayed first, and she afterwards. Sometimes she prayed half an hour together ; and often with such demonstration of the Spirit, as well as such understanding, that the whole house seemed full of the presence of the Lord. At other times she wept like a child, and said, ' Lord, what is this that Thou hast done ? Thou hast sent a man from another nation as an instrument of saving me from ruin ! I was rich before, and increased in goods, and knew not that I was

blind and naked.' Many of her friends and neighbours were concerned for her; but not so much as she was for them, as well knowing they were seeking death in the error of their life. This she declared to them without reserve; and the publishing this strange doctrine spread our names far and near, not only through the town, but the adjacent country. This brought many from distant towns to see her, who usually returned blessing God for the consolation. Some came upwards of twenty miles in a morning. After breakfast I used to pray first, and she went on. Many of our visitants were much affected, and wept bitterly. And the impression did not soon wear off. By this means we became acquainted with many of the Christians in Holland. They were a free, loving people. So we found them, and so did many of the Methodist soldiers, for they gave them house-room and firing freely. And is not the promise of the Lord sure?—'Whoever shall give unto one of these a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward.'

All this time I was still buffeted with sore temptations. I thought I was worse than Cain; that I had 'crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame.' In rough weather it was often suggested to me, 'This is on your account! See, the earth is cursed for your sake; and it will be no better till you are in hell.' I expected soon to be a prey for devils, as I was driven from all the happiness I once enjoyed. Frequently the trouble of my mind made me so weak in body, that it was with the greatest diffi-

culty I performed my exercise. The Lord had indeed given me 'a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and my life did hang in doubt before me, and I feared day and night, having no assurance of my life.' Often did I wish I had never been converted; often that I had never been born. Sometimes I could not bear the sight of a good man without pain, much less be in his company. Yet I preached every day, and endeavoured to appear open and free to my brethren. I encouraged them that were tempted 'not to fear; the Lord would soon appear for Himself.' Meantime, I continued to thunder out the terrors of the law against the ungodly; although some said I was too positive. Too positive! What! in declaring the promises and threatenings of God? Nay, if I cannot be sure of these, I will say to the Bible, as the devil did to our Lord, 'What have I to do with Thee?'

At one time I cannot remember that I had any particular temptation for some weeks. Now I thought God had forsaken me, and the devil had no need to trouble himself about me. He then set the case of Francis Spira[1] before me, so that I sunk into black despair. Everything seemed to make against me. I could not open

[1] An Italian lawyer, who recanted to escape the stake, and is said to have died of remorse in 1548. His story made a sensation throughout Europe. Haime probably refers to the story of 'The Second Spira,' an atheist who apostatized from the Christian religion, and died in despair at Westminster, December 8, 1692. The narrative was printed for John Dunton in the following January, and sold at 6*d*. Adam Clarke thinks both works were dangerous forgeries, calculated to drive many to despair.

the Bible anywhere but it condemned me. I was much distressed with dreams and visions of the night. I dreamed one night that I was in hell: another, that I was on Mount Etna; that on a sudden it shook and trembled exceedingly; and that at last it split asunder in several places, and sunk into the burning lake—all but that little spot on which I stood. Oh, how thankful was I for my preservation! And this continued for awhile, even after I awoke: but then it fled away as a dream.

I was often violently tempted to curse, and swear, and blaspheme, before and after and even while I was preaching. Sometimes when I was in the midst of the congregation I could hardly refrain from laughing aloud, yea, from uttering all kinds of ribaldry and filthy conversation. I thought there was none that loved me now, none that had any concern for my soul; but that God had taken away from everybody the affection which they once had. I cried out, 'I have sinned! What shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Preserver of men? Why hast Thou set me as a mark against Thee, so that I am a burden to myself?' I said, 'I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath.' Frequently, as I was going to preach, the devil has set upon me as a lion, telling me he would have me just then; so that it has thrown me into a cold sweat. In this agony I have catched hold of the Bible and read, 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' I have said to the enemy, 'This is the word of God, and thou canst not deny it.' Hereat he

would be like a man that shrunk back from the thrust of a sword. But he would be at me again. I again met him in the same way, till at last (blessed be God!) he fled from me. And even in the midst of the sharpest assaults God gave me just strength enough to bear them. He fulfilled His word, 'My grace is sufficient for thee: My strength is made perfect in thy weakness.' When Satan has strongly suggested, just as I was going to preach, 'I will have thee at last,' I have answered (sometimes with too much anger), 'I will have another out of thy hand first.' And many, while I was myself in the deep, were truly convinced and converted to God.

When I returned to England, and was discharged from the army, I went to Mr. Wesley, and asked if he would permit me to labour with him as a travelling preacher. He was willing: so I immediately went into a circuit. But this was far from delivering me from that inexpressible burden of soul under which I still laboured. Hence it was that I could neither be satisfied with preaching nor without it; and that wherever I went I was not able to stay long in one place, but continually wandered to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none. On this account many thought me very unstable, and looked very coldly upon me, as they were wholly unacquainted with the exercises of soul which I laboured under. I thought if David or Peter had been living, they would have pitied me. But many of my friends had not even tasted of that bread and water of affliction which had been my meat and drink for many years. May they walk so humbly and

closely with God that they may never taste it!

After I had continued some time as a travelling preacher, Mr. Wesley took me to travel with him. He knew I was fallen from my steadfastness; but he knew, likewise, how to bear with me. And when I was absent he comforted me by his letters, which were a means, under God, of saving me from utter despair. One of them was as follows:

'London, *June* 21, 1748.

'My dear Brother,

'Think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which God has seen good to try you with. Indeed, the chastisement for the present is not joyous, but grievous; nevertheless it will, by-and-by, bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is good for you to be in the fiery furnace: though the flesh be weary of it, you shall be purified therein, but not consumed. For there is One with you, whose form is as the Son of God. O, look up! Take knowledge of Him who spreads underneath you His everlasting arms! Lean upon Him with the whole weight of your soul! He is yours!—Lay hold upon Him!

Away let grief and sighing flee;
Jesus hath died for thee, for thee.

'Mercy and peace shall not forsake you. Through every threatening cloud look up; and wait for happy days.'

In this miserable condition I went to Shaftesbury to see my friends, and spent several days.

When one and another came and asked me what news, I told them, 'Good news!—Christ died to save sinners.' But it seemed to them as an idle tale: they 'cared for none of these things.' One day, being half asleep, I was, as it were, thunderstruck with an inward voice, saying, 'What doest thou here?' I cried to the Lord for mercy, and gave notice that on the Sunday following I would preach in a place at the end of the town, where four ways met. The town and villages round were soon alarmed; and at the time appointed I believe there were three or four thousand people. My inward trouble seemed suspended. I got upon a wall about seven feet high, and began with prayer. I then gave out my text: 'Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch' (Mal. iv. 1). Surely I preached that sermon with the power of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. Twelve, if not fourteen, were then convinced of sin; some of whom are, I trust, long ago safely lodged in Abraham's bosom. In a few weeks fifty persons were joined together in society. I now preached in a large room several times a week. But the people were eager to build a house, and appointed a time of meeting to consider of the means; but on that day I was taken up and put in prison, two men having sworn flatly against me that I had made a riot. After I had been in prison a night and part of a day, I was taken to a public-house. It was soon

full of people. I immediately began preaching to them; and the lions quickly became lambs. A messenger then came in, to let me know that I must appear before the mayor and aldermen. I did so. The town-clerk told me they would not send me to Dorchester jail if I would work a miracle. I told them, 'That is done already. Many swearers and drunkards are become sober, God-fearing men.' A lawyer said, 'Well, if you will take my advice, you shall not go to prison.' I replied, 'I suppose you mean, if I will give over preaching: but that I dare not do.' I was then, without any more ado, hurried away to Dorchester.

My body was now in prison; but that had been a thing of little consequence had not my soul remained in prison also—in the dungeon of despair. The jailer soon came, and fell into conversation with me; but when I began to preach Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, he quickly left me to preach to my fellow prisoners. Many of these, having no righteousness of their own to bring to God, were willing to hear of being saved by grace. So I preached to them several times while I was in prison, and they seemed greatly affected. Meantime God raised up two Quakers at Shaftesbury who became bound for my appearance at the Quarter Sessions. I had been in prison but eight days, when one of these came to fetch me out, and brought money to pay the prison-fees and all other expenses. Had I not been put into prison, it is likely some of these prisoners would never have heard the gospel. I saw, therefore, that God did all things

well. Being come back, I began preaching again ; and God was present with the people. I soon received a letter from a gentleman at London, bidding me employ two counsellors and an attorney, and draw upon him for whatever money I wanted. I carried this letter to the postmaster, and asked him if he were willing to let me have money upon it : he said, ' Yes, as much as you please.' This was soon noised about the town : so the magistrates were glad to make up the matter. And the work of God so increased that in a little time we had eighty in society.[1]

During my great distress of mind I went twice to Ireland as a travelling preacher, and in each passage over the sea I was very near being cast away. October 27, 1751, I preached at Mountmellick. The next morning, after I had travelled about two miles, suddenly my senses failed me. I was soon insensible where I was and where I came from. I supported myself a considerable time by a gate in the road, as I did not know which way to go, nor what place to ask for. At length my understanding returned, and I began to weep. But what I passed through I cannot express, so unspeakable was my anguish. But

[1] When Wesley visited Shaftesbury on July 31, 1750, the house was filled. 'The chief opposers of John Haime were there ; but none stirred, none spoke, none smiled. Many were in tears ; and many others were filled with joy unspeakable ' (*Journal*). Haime went on to Cornwall with Wesley, and was one of the witnesses whom he took with him in his interview with Mrs. Morgan, who seemed to have slandered Wesley. Haime was also with Wesley at Wednesbury the following spring (*Journal*, August 25, 1750 ; April 1, 1751 ; May 19, 1753), and accompanied him to Yorkshire in 1753.

the tender mercy of God supported me therein, that my spirit might not fail before Him.

In the beginning of September, 1766, I was living at Shaftesbury, when Mr. Wesley passing through, in his way to Cornwall, I asked if it would be agreeable for me to be at his house in London a few days. He said, 'Yes, as long as you please.' But before I set out I received the following letter :

'St. Ives, Cornwall, *September* 16, 1766.

'My dear Brother,

'I think you have no need to go to London : God has, it seems, provided a place for you here. Mr. Hoskins wants a worn-out preacher to live with him, to take care of his family, and to pray with them morning and evening.'[1]

I went down. As soon as Mr. Hoskins saw me, he said, 'You are welcome to stay here as long as you live.' But no sooner did I fix there than I was, if possible, ten times worse than before. In vain I strove to make myself easy ; the more I strove, the more miserable I was. Not that I wanted anything that this world can afford. But can this world satisfy a soul that was made for God ? The distress of my mind soon became intolerable : it was a burden too heavy for me to bear. It seemed to me that unless I got some relief I must die in despair. One day I retired into the hall, fell on my face, and cried for mercy ; but got no answer. I got up, and walked up

[1] Wesley's *Journal*, iii. 234, iv. 54, 83, 109, 134 (August 29, 1778).

and down the room, wringing my hands, and crying as if I should break my heart, begging of God, for Christ's sake, if there were any mercy for me, to help me : and, blessed be His name ! all on a sudden I felt such a change through my soul and body as is past description. I was afraid I should alarm the whole house with the expressions of my joy. I had a full witness from the Spirit of God that I should not find that bondage any more. Nor have I ever found it to this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies !

But, notwithstanding this wonderful change, I had not the faith which I had once. But I found a very great alteration by reading the Scriptures. The promises opened to me more and more ; and I expected to find some great thing wrought upon me all at once. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. He led me by a way I had not known. He greatly deepened His work in my soul, and drove out His enemies by little and little, till I could clearly say, ' Thy will be done.' The lion became a lamb ; and I found the truth of that word by happy experience : ' Thou wilt keep his soul in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.'

I now thought I would stay with Mr. Hoskins ; for he was very kind to me. But I soon began to be so bound in spirit that I could hardly pray in the family ; nay, I could not ask a blessing on our food without much hesitation and stammering. And all the comforts of life, which were then in great plenty, became al-

together comfortless. Mr. Story being then in the round, I made my complaint to him. He desired me to take his place for a month, while he went into the east of Cornwall. This I gladly undertook; and although for the space of three weeks my coat was not once dry upon my back, yet I was warmer within, and far more comfortable, than in the warm parlour.

When Mr. Story returned, I thought I would stay at Mr. Hoskins's a few days, and then travel. But the first night I was as restless as ever: so in the morning I took my leave, and in January, 1767, went into the east of Cornwall. I found it was good for me to be there: my faith increased daily. And, blessed be God! I found love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost springing up in my soul. I trust God will continue them to my dying day, and then receive me to Himself.

I had long been travelling in the wilderness in 'a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death.' This had been my lot for twenty years: a just judgement of the Almighty for my sin. Blessed be His name that He did not wholly cast me off! But I saw clearly nothing would avail but a fresh application of the Saviour's blood to my wounded soul. I had now a happy sense of this: which, with the thoughts of His forbearance twenty years before my conversion, His filling me with His love for three years, His dealings with me in my fallen condition, and my present deliverance, caused my soul to overflow with wonder and praise for His long-suffering good-

ness. I saw nothing was too hard for God. I could cast myself on the Lord Jesus. All the promises in the Scriptures were full of comfort; particularly this, 'I have known thee in the furnace of affliction.' The Scriptures were all precious to my soul, as the rain to the thirsty land. And when Satan assaulted me afresh, I did not stand to reason with him, but fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge. Hereby the snare was soon broken, and I found an increase both of faith, hope, and love. I could now truly say, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters: He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.'

It was not my intention ever to write any account of these things, had not some of my friends greatly pressed me thereto. Nevertheless, I put off from time to time, being conscious I had no talent for writing, until my peace was wellnigh lost. At last I was prevailed upon to begin. I had not written many lines before I found my soul in perfect peace. I found myself likewise greatly assisted to recollect the manifold dealings of God with me: so that I have the greatest reason to believe it is His will I should make known, even by these instances of His goodness, that He is 'long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' May He bless the feeble attempt to the good of many! May they learn wisdom by the things that I have

suffered! And be all the glory ascribed unto Him that 'sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever!'

Here closes Haime's story as he told it in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1780. Five years later his friend, George Story, afterwards editor of the magazine, sent this account of his death, which appeared in the same periodical for 1785:

On August 18, 1784, at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, died that faithful soldier of Christ, Mr. John Haime, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. For more than a twelvemonth past his health visibly declined. A hectic fever, which continually increased, soon reduced him to skin and bone; nevertheless, his zeal for the glory of God, and concern for the salvation of sinners, abated not in the least. He preached as long as he was able to speak, and longer than he could stand without support.

On the Sunday before his death he requested the society to attend him in his own room; and for several minutes powerfully and affectionately exhorted them to persevere to the end, in that faith which worketh by love and purifieth the heart.

The morning he died, in attempting to get out of bed, he fell down, and was much hurt; which occasioned violent pain. In about two hours after, the pain being a little abated, he desired to be raised up in bed: and after shaking hands with five or six friends who were present, he prayed for the divine blessing upon them separately; then for the church in general;

and, lastly, for the little flock over which he had long been overseer. He then leaned back in bed; and although the pain was not so intense, yet there were evident tokens of his approaching dissolution. His strength gradually decreased, and his sight and speech in a great measure failed. Yet he frequently broke out in prayer, in these and such-like sentences: 'O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, and have not been confounded. In Thee do I now trust; let me never be confounded. Salvation is of the Lord. I have nothing to bring or to offer unto the Lord, but "God be merciful to me a sinner!" When my soul departs from this body, a convoy of angels will conduct me to the paradise of God.' His last prayer that could be understood was to this effect: 'O Almighty God, who dwellest in light, which no mortal can approach, and where no unclean thing can enter: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts; grant us continually sweet peace, quietness, and assurance of Thy favour.' About an hour before his decease he was heard to say, 'This is a good way! O that all may tread this path in the important hour!' Presently after, he departed so quietly that it was scarcely perceivable when he drew his last breath.

WHITCHURCH, *September* 1, 1784.

SAMPSON STANIFORTH[1]

Rev. and dear Sir,

I never thought I should be called upon to appear in print, or to give an account of myself, considering how many of my brethren there are who have not only deeper experience, but far greater abilities and more time than I have. But since you desire it of me, I think it my duty to obey those that are over me in the Lord. I now, therefore, cast my mite into the treasury, and pray God it may be profitable to some soul. I shall first speak of my life from the time of my birth till I was about twenty-five years old; and, secondly, from the time that God called me to the present time. I am sensible my case is peculiar, both in a state of sin and in my conversion to God; and my account of it must be very imperfect, as I never kept any diary, and can only set down a few things that I can call to mind after so many years.

I was born at Sheffield, in December, 1720. My father, who was a cutler, had thirteen children, but only four lived to years of maturity. There was no care taken in my education, none in the

[1] From *The Arminian Magazine*, 1783

family having the form, much less the power, of religion; so that while I was young I heard nothing about either religion or morality. Hence it was that I had no conviction of any kind, no fear of God before my eyes, no thought of His providence, of His sparing mercy, or indeed of His having anything to do in the world. Nay, I was totally averse to all good, and hated the very appearance of religion. And in this deplorable state I continued till I was fourteen years of age.

I was then put apprentice to a baker. This was a very good place for my body, but no care at all was taken of my soul; only that sometimes my master made me read on Sunday a chapter in the Bible. But I knew not what it meant, nor why it was called the Word of God, or what people went to church for. From fourteen to seventeen I was diligent in my business, and gave satisfaction to my master. But all this time I never once thought, 'Why was I born into the world? What is my business in it? Or where shall I go when this life is over?'

I was now fast bound with the chains of sin, filled with unholy desires, and, as often as occasion offered, bringing them into practice. And I had not the least remorse for any of the sins I was daily committing, being as perfectly 'without God in the world' as the beasts that perish. I now got into bad company, and by their advice and encouragement ran into open wickedness, gaming in particular, to the great disadvantage of my master and the great sorrow of my parents. And yet I still had not the

least compunction, nor any more sorrow for sin than a wild ass's colt.

I began about this time to get into company with the soldiers that were in the town. And I frequently told my mother that I had an inclination to go into the army. This troubled her much, and she often with tears expostulated with me concerning it. To keep me out of it, she used to supply me with money. But this only enabled me to keep more company, and to run into all manner of sin. Several times she fetched me away from my companions at night; but whenever I could, I ran away from her, and got to them again; and in this ungodly course I went on till I was about nineteen years of age.

One night I was in company with a neighbour's son, who had been in the army some time, and was now absent from it upon a furlough, to spend a few days with his friends. After we had been drinking till about eleven o'clock, he asked me whether I would not 'list. I immediately answered I would; and he gave me three guineas, and a crown to drink His Majesty's health. We continued drinking all night. In the morning one came in that knew me, who went and told my mother. She came with one of my sisters, and took me home and put me to bed. Afterwards she went and returned the money which I had received, and with a little more bought me off. I then went home to my master, who received me very kindly, and did not upbraid me with anything that I had done.

But all this made not the least impression

upon me. I felt no gratitude either to God or man. About eight days after, as I was one morning going out with my bread, I met the sergeant and two more soldiers, and told them I wanted to 'list. We went into an alehouse together, and I received the money from them. I sent the basket back to my master, and immediately went two miles to the justice's to take the oath. About a fortnight after I left Sheffield. All my friends were in tears; but it made no impression on me, as I was not only fierce and passionate, but also sullen and malicious, without any feeling of humanity. Instead of weeping with those that wept, I even rejoiced in their sorrow.

Hence we marched for Edinburgh. We arrived there on the 15th of the November [1741] preceding the great frost. I was drafted into one of the companies that lay in the castle; there my hardships began. There were no barracks then, but we lay upon straw in the vault, and throughout the winter had but one fire for seventy men. Through my own sin and folly, my little pay was soon gone; and generally two days in a week, Tuesday and Friday, being the days before the pay-days, I had little or nothing to eat. But even this, together with hard duty, made no manner of impression upon my heart. Nay, I became more hardened, and added profane swearing to my other sins. From thence we marched to Glasgow, where I several times heard that servant of God, Mr. Whitefield.[1] But I had no conception of

[1] June to September, 1742.

what he said, nor any desire to profit by it. We next marched to Ayr, where a kind Providence watched over me for good. For I and two more wild fellows took a boat, and rowed down toward the sea. But we had not skill to manage it, and the ebbing tide was carrying us down to the sea; when just at the end of the pier, the boat gave a turn, and we caught hold of a post. Here we held till help came; otherwise we had probably gone to the bottom of the sea, and to the bottomless pit at once, as we were all sinning with a high hand, drinking in iniquity like water.

From this place we marched to Perth, and lay there some time. During our stay I paid my addresses to a young woman. But though she loved me, I did not behave to her with that honour I should have done. Just at that time the old Highland regiment came to quarter at Perth; and I was remanded to the other side of the river, to a little village called Bridge-End. She had some relations in this regiment, to whom she told what had passed between us. They sent for me, and for some time behaved with a deal of kindness, expecting that I would give them farther promises of fulfilling my engagement with her. She was present at the same time. Finding I did not in any wise answer their expectations, they began talking together in their own language, and, as I could not but observe, with great warmth of spirit. Though I did not, she understood what they said, and endeavoured to pacify them. A little after she rose up, called me out, told me they were determined to kill me, and begged me. for God's sake, to return

with all speed into my own quarters: I took her advice, and returned immediately. I came to town again the next market-day. They heard of it, and were in search of me, being fully determined upon revenge. But she found me out first, informed me of their fixed resolution to murder me, and insisted on my crossing the water without delay. I ran to the water-side. A boat was just going off, into which I stepped: but before we were half over the water they came running down, with their swords drawn, to the river-side. But they durst go no farther, there being strict orders that none should pass the river.

We marched from Perth to Edinburgh, and thence to Shields, in order to embark with the rest of the army for Flanders. I had now been three years and a half in the army. We were eight days on our passage, and landed at Ostend, in spring, 1743. Thence we marched to Ghent, where we were joined by three regiments more, to guard the king's[1] baggage and the army's clothing. This was a long and fatiguing march, as well as a dangerous one. We had above four hundred wagons, with other carriages, and several pieces of cannon, under our care, and expected every day to be attacked by a part of the French army. So that we were obliged constantly to march in order of battle, and had no settled camp till we came to the grand army, a few days after the battle of Dettingen.

We then marched to the camp at Worms.

[1] George II was at the head of the English and Hanoverian army.

There orders were read at the head of every regiment, that no soldier must be seen above a mile from the camp, upon pain of death; which was to be executed immediately, without the form of a court-martial. But this did not at all deter me. Although my life was in continual danger, I went on in the same course all the campaign, neither fearing God nor regarding man. One night in particular, as soon as we had pitched our tents, I set out, with some of my comrades, to a little town which lay on the left of the camp. I was busy in drinking, when the captain with a guard of horse was coming to take us up, being appointed to seize upon all who were found out of the lines, and to hang up the first man without delay. I looked back, and saw the captain and his guard, who had shut all the gates. But I ran to the great gate, wherein was a wicket-door, which was only upon the latch. I slipped through, and before the gate could be opened for horsemen to follow me, I ran some distance from the town, and hid myself among the vines. There I lay till they were passed, and then got into the camp just as the roll was calling.

After several marches we came, toward the close of the year, to the camp near Spires. Before this many grievous complaints had been made of our soldiers plundering the country. To prevent this, it was again proclaimed at the head of every regiment that the captain with his guard would be out every night, and had express orders immediately to hang up the first man that he took. I was close to the officer who read this; and, to show how little we regarded it, as

soon as he was gone to his tent, I and ten more of our regiment set out to plunder. We went to a village about two miles from the camp, to search for money, but could find none : however, we saw four bullocks, which we drove away before us. One of our officers met me, and asked whose they were. I told him they were some that we had bought : he said, ' Very well,' and went away. We sold three of them, and killed the other. The next day the poor people came to the camp, and found the three which we had sold. They made their complaint to the commanding-officer, who immediately gave orders to apprehend us. But that very morning I had been sent to some distance from the camp on an out-party : so the good providence of God, though I knew Him not, once more preserved me from a shameful death.

Orders now came for our marching into Flanders, in which long march nothing material happened. The English army quartered in Bruges and Ghent. Our regiment was in Ghent ; where we had cold lodgings, little fire, and hard duty. I lay here three months, still continuing in my ignorance and rebellion against God. Meantime I had many sorrowful letters from my dear mother, with frequent little supplies of money. All the next summer we lay quite inactive, only plundering all the country. When I look back on those times, I know not which to admire most, God's goodness or my own wickedness : to complete which, I was now engaged with a Negroman's wife, who was passionately fond of me. But what is too hard for God ? I was now about

twenty-five years old; and had never yet once said, with any real desire, 'Lord, have mercy upon me!' But better days were at hand. The manner of God's bringing me out of the horrible pit I am next to relate.

After several marches we came to another camp, where we lay nine or ten weeks. There was one in the same company with me, whose experience was a direct contrast to mine. His name was Mark Bond. He was born at Barnard-Castle, in the county of Durham. For many years I was wholly without God in the world; but he feared God from three years old, and was under great concern for his soul, and many times prayed to God in secret. When his parents sometimes put him to bed without saying his prayers, as soon as they were gone, he would rise and say them; otherwise he could not sleep. From this time till he was seven years old he was harassed with various temptations; but with one above all: he was violently and continually importuned to curse God, till one day, when he was about seven years of age, he went into the fields, under a hedge, and actually did it. The moment he had uttered the words, he was in great horror and distress of soul: he then thought God would no more have mercy, and that there was no salvation for him. Nevertheless he was, by the fear of God, restrained from outward sin. From that time till he was about eighteen the sorrows of his heart were enlarged. He concluded he must go to hell, and had no Christian friend to advise with. O what need have we to bless God for those helps he was

destitute of! He durst not, however, put an end to his own life; but, a recruiting party being in the town, he entered into the army, desiring and hoping that he should soon be killed. Upon this principle he 'listed in the company I was in; but his ways were not like those of other men. Out of his little pay he saved money to send to his friends. We could never get him to drink with us; but he was always full of sorrow; he read much, and was much in private prayer.

At the beginning of the campaign he went to hear the preaching of John Haime, William Clements, and John Evans. There he found what he wanted. God soon spake peace to his soul, and he rejoiced with joy unspeakable. He then began to think whom he should open his mind to. He thought of several; but could fix on none but me. He could not shake me off his mind till he came to me and told me what God had done for his soul, adding, how desperate my case would be if I died without experiencing the same. But all of this was strange language to me. I understood it not; and as soon as he was gone I used to go to her I mentioned before and make sport of all he had said. He came to me after, but I would not hear him. He then endeavoured to turn his thoughts on some one else; but I was continually on his mind, sleeping and waking. He could not rest, either day or night, but it was on his mind, 'Go to Sampson.' He came to me, and told me what he had felt and suffered on my account. But I did not mind it, till he met me one time, when I was in distress, having neither food, money, nor credit. On his

coming and asking me to go and hear the preaching, I said, 'You had better give me something to eat or drink, for I am both hungry and dry.' He took me to a sutler's, and gave me both meat and drink. Then he took me by the hand, and led me to a place erected about half a mile from the camp. I had no desire to hear anything of religion, but on the contrary went with great reluctance. Who it was that was speaking I do not know; but this I know, that God spake to my heart. In a few minutes I was in deep distress, full of sorrow, under a deep sense of sin and danger, but mixed with a desire of mercy. And now, I that never prayed in my life was continually calling upon God. In time past, I could shed tears for nothing; but now the rock was rent; a fountain was opened, and tears of contrition ran plentifully down my cheeks. A cry after God was put into my heart, which has never yet ceased, and, I trust, never will. My dear companion observed it with great joy. I was as it were knocked down like an ox. I had nothing to plead, having never had either the power or the form of godliness. No works, no righteousness was mine. I could only say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

From that hour, as much addicted to it as I was before, I never swore an oath; and I was never more overcome by liquor, though I had been so enslaved to it for several years. Indeed there was a constant cry in my inmost soul, 'Save, Lord, or I perish!' When the preaching was over my dear companion took me in his arms, blessed God with a joyful heart, and said

he would come the next night and fetch me to the preaching. I went to my tent full of sorrow, thoroughly convinced what a miserable state I was in, and seeing all my sins stand in battle-array against me. All the next day I was longing for the time of hearing preaching and seeing my dear companion. But I had not patience to stay so long. I went to the place some time before they began. There were several soldiers of other regiments come before me. Some were reading; others conversing of the things of God. Some at a little distance were singing; and some down in a corner were at prayer. I was walking about, my heart full of sorrow, my eyes full of tears, wishing I could pour out my heart to God like them, when one came to me, and kindly asked me if I came to preaching, and how long I had done so. I answered, 'Last night was the first time.' He took me aside, and said, 'Let us go to prayer.' I said, 'I cannot pray; I never prayed in my life.' But he went to prayer with me. By this time my dear friend was come, and rejoiced to find that I was there before him. The more I heard, the more deeply was I convinced of sin, and of my danger on account of it. He asked if I had a Bible or any good book. I said, 'No; I knew not that ever I had read any.' He said, 'I have a piece of an old Bible; take it. I can do better without it than you.' I took it as a great treasure, and read in it with great joy. The next day my old companions found me out, and called me many names. But it made no impression upon me at all, as I was every day more and more resolved

to save my soul. I spent more and more time in reading and prayer, and missed no opportunity of hearing the word. I was deaf to all the allurements of my comrades, regarding neither their evil nor their good words. I had now a tender conscience ; I could neither drink, swear, game, nor plunder any more. I would not take so much as an apple, a bunch of grapes, nor anything that was not my own.

My companion, who had been employed for some time in an out-party, now came home to the company. He immediately took me to be with him as his comrade, and watched over me as a tender parent over a beloved child. He inquired into all my affairs ; and, finding I had contracted some debts, said, 'The followers of Christ must be first just, and then charitable. We will put both our pays together, and live as hard as we can ; and what we spare will pay the debt.' From this time I continued, by the grace of God, seeking Him with my whole heart.

Many trials I had, partly from my old companions, partly from the sins I was before given to. But, glory be to God ! I was preserved from both, and enabled to persevere in the way of duty. My companion took every step he could to help me forward in the ways of God. Nevertheless all this campaign I was in great distress of soul ; yet I hated sin, and followed God, though I knew He was angry with me. The more I heard, and the more I read the word, the greater was my pain ; for I saw more clearly my miserable state, both by nature and by practice. All the remainder of the campaign I

was in deep distress, having sometimes a little hope, sometimes none. But still I was convinced the way of duty was the only way of safety.

The work of God now greatly increased among us. And indeed the change which God wrought upon me gave a great alarm, not only in our company, but through the whole regiment. My dear companion and I began to reprove sinners, to invite them to hear the preaching, and to exhort as many as would hear to turn to God and flee from the wrath to come. And it pleased God to bless our weak endeavours, so that before the end of the campaign we had ten in the regiment I was in, who were closely united together, and were joined in such love for one another that we had in effect all things in common. And, thanks be to God, the flame spread through all the camp, so that we had a large number of hearers, and more and more were continually added to the society. I still went on my way sorrowing, but bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. When the camp broke up, we marched for winter quarters, part to Ghent, and part to Bruges. I was afraid we should be left without a preacher; but God took care of this also. For as the army was divided, so were the preachers. John Haime and John Evans lay at Bruges, and William Clements at Ghent, where our regiment was. I rejoiced much at hearing this; although it could not take away the load of guilt which pressed down my soul.

As soon as our regiment was settled at Ghent, we hired two rooms: one for preaching and one for private meetings; for, when off duty, we

met twice a day. Here my sorrows increased. It was strongly suggested to me that my day of grace was past, that I had sinned the unpardonable sin, and it signified nothing to strive any longer. O what distress my poor soul was in! I thought the very stones in the street and the timber in the wall cried out against me for my enormous wickedness. I felt that truth, 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities; but a wounded spirit who can bear?'

I told all my troubles to my dear companion, who truly sympathized with me; but told me I should not be thus long, for the time of my deliverance was at hand.

Yet I went on in the same state, having little hope of mercy, till one day I was ordered on duty at one of the out-posts. I was in deep distress, which my companion observed, and, when he parted from me, said, 'I hope you will have better news to tell me when you see me again.' When I came to the guard-house, I longed to be alone, that I might pour out my soul before God. I thought myself the most miserable creature on earth, far beneath the brute and inanimate creatures; all of which answered the end of their creation, which I had never done! From twelve at night till two it was my turn to stand sentinel at a dangerous post. I had a fellow sentinel; but I desired him to go away, which he willingly did. As soon as I was alone, I kneeled down, and determined not to rise, but to continue crying and wrestling with God, till He had mercy on me. How long I was in that agony I cannot tell; but as I looked up to heaven

I saw the clouds open exceeding bright, and I saw Jesus hanging on the cross. At the same moment these words were applied to my heart, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' My chains fell off; my heart was free. All guilt was gone, and my soul was filled with unutterable peace. I loved God and all mankind, and the fear of death and hell was vanished away. I was filled with wonder and astonishment. I then closed my eyes; but the impression was still the same. And for about ten weeks, while I was awake, let me be where I would, the same appearance was still before my eyes, and the same impression upon my heart, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' [1]

The corporal came at two o'clock to relieve the sentries, but I could not think the time was half gone. When I came into the guard-house I was full of matter, and longed to tell what God had done for my soul. But I did not dare to cast pearls before swine. I longed for my dear companion, that we might rejoice together. As soon as the time for relieving the guard came, I hastened to the room where I lay. As I was going my companion was looking for me, and, before I could speak, said, 'I know God has set your soul at liberty; I see it in your counten-

[1] Matthew Arnold says (*St. Paul and Protestantism*, p. 54): 'The conversion of Paul is in itself an incident of precisely the same order as the conversion of Sampson Staniforth, a Methodist soldier in the campaign of Fontenoy. Staniforth himself relates his conversion as follows, in words which bear plainly marked on them the very stamp of good faith.' He then quotes this passage, beginning 'From twelve at night,' and adds: 'Not the narrative, in the Acts, of Paul's journey to Damascus could more convince us, as we have said, of its own honesty.'

ance.' I then told him all. And after we had taken some refreshment we went to our little company, and concluded the day in prayer and praise, magnifying God for all His mighty works.

During our stay in Ghent we met twice or thrice a day, either for preaching, prayer, or to tell our experience to each other. And God increased our number every day, so that we had now some in almost every regiment. I was still happy; but found a strong desire to be more holy, that I might be more happy. And from this time, rev. and dear sir, I found my heart united to you, and to the people that were under your care, of whom brother Clements was often speaking; and I truly loved them whom I had not seen. Indeed I considered myself as a member of the same body, and longed greatly to see them.

About this time I began to think of my parents and family. My dear mother had, from time to time, sent me little supplies, either in money or such other things as she knew I wanted. I now sent her a long letter, asking pardon of my father and her for all my past disobedience, and telling them that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. I thanked her for what she had done for me; but desired she would not send anything more, as I knew it must straiten her, and I had now learned to 'be content with my wages.' This letter they could not at all understand, and it was handed about from one to another, till it came to one Mr. Wadsworth, a Dissenting minister, who, having known what manner of life I led before, could not in any wise

believe it. However, he wrote me a friendly letter, and sent me a Bible, which was more welcome to me than gold; as was a Common Prayer Book, which my mother sent me. A few days after, my letter came into the hands of Mr. John Wilson, who was then one of the chief persons in your society, and much alive to God. He sent me a comfortable letter and a hymn-book, which much refreshed my soul. About this time you sent some books over, which were of great service to us.

On March 26, 1745, the French, taking the field before us, opened their camp with seventy-six thousand men, and above a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. We were then ordered to march out of our quarters; but before we could come up they had laid siege to Tournay, and had intrenched themselves up to the very chin. After several little movements we were all assembled on the 19th of April, under the Duke of Cumberland, being in all, besides the train of artillery, forty-six thousand men.

By this time, having given way to unprofitable reasoning, I lost my rapturous joy, and a kind of heaviness followed; but, blessed be God, the evidence of my acceptance was not interrupted.

We then drew so near the French that we could hear their evening and morning gun. But between us and them there was a wood, which we were obliged to cut a way through. All the pioneers were employed in this. On the 28th I was ordered to go and guard some baggage; but on the 29th, early in the morning, the corporal brought me word, 'You must go into the ranks;

for before to-morrow night we shall have a battle.' When I came into the ranks, I felt some fear; but as we came near the French army, we halted a little. I then stepped out of the line, threw myself on the ground, and prayed that God would deliver me from all fear, and enable me to behave as a Christian and good soldier. Glory be to God! He heard my cry, and took away all my fear. I came into the ranks again, and had both peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. By this time night came on. We were ordered to lie on our arms. Toward morning part of the army marched through the pass which we had cut through the wood. My dear companion and I had sweet communion together, having constant and strong confidence in God. As soon as the dawn of the day appeared, we were ordered to advance. The column on the right had passed through. I was in the second column. But all the road was made almost impassable, which broke the head of our column. And in the meantime, the French batteries, playing upon us, did us much hurt. We wheeled off, in order to get into the plains of Fontenoy. I had not marched far before we met a horse without his rider, and the lower part of his head taken off by a cannon-ball. A little after I saw one of the guards lie dead, and soon after many more. We still advanced, and drew up in line of battle in the plain of Fontenoy. The French before us were intrenched up to the neck, and many batteries of cannon were playing upon us. I was in the front rank, and the left-hand man joining the Dutch. We stood there till the

Dutch turned their backs and marched away. I was then left exposed to a battery on the left, and the batteries and small arms in the front. Soon after our regiment, with some others, were ordered to advance and attack the French in their trenches. We marched up boldly; but when we came close to the town of Fontenoy we observed a large battery ready to be opened on us. And the cannon were loaded with small bullets, nails, and pieces of old iron. We had orders to lie down on the ground; but, for all that, many were wounded, and some killed. Presently after the discharge we rose up, and marched to the first trench, still keeping up our fire. They gave way; but when we entered batteries in the flanks were opened, which tore our regiment so that we were obliged to fall back into the rear. Yet we rallied, and renewed the attack. But it was to no purpose. All the day I was in great spirits, and as composed in my mind as if I had been hearing a sermon. I neither desired life nor death, but was entirely happy in God. Night coming on, the retreat was beaten, and the whole army marched away, leaving our cannon, and sick, and wounded behind us. The profane sinners now received reproof, and promised to become new men; and though most of them soon forgot their resolutions, yet in some there was a lasting change.

As soon as I had opportunity to speak to my dear companion, he told me it had been a happy day to him. He had received two musket-balls: but one struck him on the right thigh, and hit on two sevenpenny pieces that were in his pocket

(they are of a mixed metal, about the size of half a crown); it appeared to him as if he had received a blow with a stick. The other struck him on his left side-pocket, upon a clasped knife, and bent the blade and loosened it in the handle. So that we may well say:

> Go and return secure from death,
> Till God command thee home.

I had eaten nothing that day but a little brown bread, and drank only a little water. But I was very thankful, as if I had received it immediately from the hands of God.

We marched all that night and the next day, and more and more of our scattered army overtook us; but many lay down on the ground, and could go no farther. Glory be to God! He gave me constant peace, and strength to keep with the main body, being always one of the first, till we encamped at Lessines. We then began to inquire who of our society was gone home. We missed many out of our regiment. One was saying, 'O, how happy I am!' and just as he spoke a cannon-shot came and took off his head. We lost four preachers and many of the society. But my dear companion, with the other brethren in the regiment, were still as the heart of one man. Such was the religion of the soldiers at this time, before any of them were corrupted by new opinions! I then thought, 'This state of life is the only one to love and serve God in: I would not change it for any other under the sun, upon any consideration whatever.' How did this sweeten all the fatigues, and hardships, and

dangers I had to go through! Glory be to God! I rejoiced in them all. Meantime I was continually exhorting sinners to repent. And they would bear it now, as the French were so near us, and we knew not how soon they would fall upon us. The whole army was drawn up in order of battle, expecting to be attacked by them every day. But, instead of this, they pushed forward, and took Ghent, and afterwards all Flanders, as far as Ostend.

About this time the lieutenant and paymaster of our regiment sent for me, and said, 'My servant was killed at Fontenoy, and I intend to take you in his place.' As he had always been particularly kind to me, I knew not what to do. It was not a command, but a favour offered, which he left to my choice. I earnestly prayed to God for direction. I then returned him my sincerest thanks for his kind offer, but said I could not accept it. He looked earnestly at me, and said, 'Pray, what are your reasons for refusing it?' I answered, 'Sir, the first is, I could not have time to attend preaching, and meet with my Christian friends; the second, I should be obliged to do on the Lord's Day what would give me great pain, and displease God.' He replied, 'I like you the better for being so honest. Go your way. I will be your friend.'

A short time after there came an order for ten men out of our regiment to go to the train, and learn the exercise of the great guns, to supply the place of those that were killed at Fontenoy; but active, sober men, and such as could be depended on. The corporal came and said, 'Get yourself ready; for you must leave the regiment,

and go to the artillery.' I was sorry to leave my brethren, but could not in conscience disobey a lawful command. My brethren also were sorry; but we encouraged each other, that we should not be far from one another. So we prayed and parted. My pay was now near double to what it was before. And I had two of the society with me, brothers Hammond and Hodges; both much alive to God. I was kept in constant peace, athirst for God, and longing for more of His image. As often as I could, I went to see my dear brethren, and we always prayed and praised God together. And even the rest of the company were glad to see me; for I have frequently remarked there is a kind of affection in the army toward one another which is hardly to be found elsewhere.

I had not been many weeks in my new employ when we heard there was a rising in Scotland, and that the rebels had defeated the king's army at Preston Pans, near Edinburgh[1]; and orders came that the greatest part of the English army should march directly for England. I was sent back to my own regiment. We made forced marches, and, the transports being ready at Helvoetsluys, we soon came within sight of land. In all these movements I found no decay of inward life. I knew it was my duty to obey my superiors, and God made it my pleasure. He was always before me in every place; and I could boldly testify:

> Thy presence makes my paradise,
> And where Thou art is heaven.

[1] September 21, 1745.

Our regiment and two more landed at Gravesend, when we marched on, and encamped at Deptford-heath, in the latter end of October, 1745.[1] The next Lord's Day we of the society went to Bexley church. We lay at Bexley three or four weeks, and constantly attended on Mr. Piers's ministry; and there we received a larger account of you. O, how did I then long to see you! Thence we marched to Deptford. When we were drawn up there in the Broadway, William Giles came and invited us to his house, where we spent the evening in singing and prayer, and my soul was much refreshed. My mind was still kept in perfect peace. It was nothing to me where I was, at home or abroad, in the field or in the church, marching or sitting in the closet. We made long marches from hence, hearing that the rebels were marching swiftly southward. Wherever we were I inquired if there were any Methodists, that we might sing and pray together. The army was assembled when we came to Stafford; and we were ordered to be ready at a minute's warning. We had not been here many hours when at ten o'clock, in a cold frosty night, about the middle of December, the drum beat to arms. We were drawn up in order of battle, and marched on, our spies informing us that in two hours we should meet the rebels. We had then orders to load our pieces, and to be ready at the word of command.

[1] Charles Wesley says in his *Journal*, October 17, 1745: 'We had twenty of our brethren from Flanders to dine with us at the Foundery, and rejoiced in the distinguishing grace of God toward them.'

We marched on, and the morning came on. The rebels, now hearing of us, turned off for the Derby road,[1] thinking, it seems, to pass us and get to London. But this time we had got to Stone, where we learned they were returning northward. On this the main army was ordered to pursue them, and some regiments to march back to London, lest they should give us the slip. Our regiment was one of these. We were to lie in the towns and villages near London. I had a great desire to lie at Greenwich or Deptford. We made long marches; and when we were near London orders came that our regiment should be quartered at Greenwich and Deptford. I was glad, though I knew not why; for I had no knowledge either of the place or the people. On Christmas Eve we came to the place; and I was quartered in the next public-house, which is the very house where I now live.

On Christmas Day we went to church, and spent the evening at brother Giles's, in singing and prayer. We lay here till April, 1746, but had orders not to go above a mile from our quarters. Hearing these orders read, I went to the commanding-officer, who said, 'Well, Sampson, what do you want?' I said, 'Leave, sir, if you please, for two or three of us to go to London twice or thrice a week.' He said, 'For what?' I answered, 'To hear preaching.' 'What,' said he, 'cannot you go to church?' I said, 'Yes, sir; and I count it both my duty and privilege so to do. But I am much united in affection to the Rev. Mr. Wesley; and I want to see and hear

[1] December 4, 1745.

him, and to be joined with him and his people.' He looked at me, and said, 'Well, thou art the same honest man as before.' He immediately wrote an order for me and one or two more to pass to and from London as often as we pleased. He added that he knew Mr. Wesley, and was glad I had made so good a choice. When not on duty, we likewise met twice a day in the old room at Deptford, to read the Scriptures, and to pray and praise God. At this time I had no thought of preaching, though my dear companion often told me God would call me to it before I died.

Twice a week, during our stay at Deptford, I went to the Foundery, or West-street chapel, where I was always profited by your preaching. Here I became acquainted with her that is now my wife. After much consideration and prayer, I mentioned the subject of marriage to her. After a little while she answered, 'If I was out of the army, and in some way of business, she had no objection.' So here it rested for the present.

One day one of the society desired me to go to Eltham with a message. As soon as I came thither (it being three miles from our quarters), a sergeant and two soldiers seized me as a deserter. They brought me back as such to Greenwich, and carried me before the commanding-officer. I told him the real case. He asked them, 'Had you any passport?' On their answering, 'No,' he said, 'Make haste home, or I will order you to the guard-house.' He then smiled upon me, and said, 'Go to your companions.'

One night, as we were coming from the Foundery, a soldier met me and said, 'Make haste home; for early in the morning you are to march for Canterbury and Dover.' I was a little struck, and did not find my mind so passive in all things as it used to be. When I came to Deptford I found the orders were come. We spent great part of the night in prayer and praise, and early on April 22, with many tears, left our dear friends at Deptford.

Before we set out my dear companion was fully persuaded that I should get out of the army. But he prayed that he might not live to see it. And he believed God would grant his request.

We stayed awhile at Canterbury, and met twice a day; but there was then no society there. Thence we marched to Dover Castle. Here I received a letter from Deptford, informing me that my dear friend would be glad to see me once more. Having procured a furlough for fourteen days, I set out on May 28, about four in the afternoon, and, not stopping, reached Deptford (sixty-seven miles) about four the next day. On June 12 (my permit being then out) I was married. The same day a letter from my officer informed me that our regiment was embarking for Holland, and I must come immediately. So I took leave of my wife and friends on my wedding-day, and set out without delay. The next day we began our march to Gravesend, where the transports lay. We embarked on June 20, with a fair wind. But when we were within sight of land the ship wherein I was

stuck fast upon the sand-bank: we lay rolling about, every moment expecting the ship to break. Many of the soldiers cried to God for mercy: our little company, seizing the opportunity, exhorted them to forsake sin, and turn to God; which they promised to do, if He would please to spare them. All this time my soul was truly happy. I had peace with God, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

While preparation was making to save as many as possible when the ship should sink, she gave a spring, and got off the bank, and in a few hours we came safe to Williamstadt. We marched immediately to camp (it being the latter end of June), being commanded by Prince Charles of Lorraine. In a few days we came within sight of the French army. My wife had desired me to apply for my discharge. But I thought this was not the proper time, as we expected a battle every day, lest I should seem afraid to fight, and so bring a scandal upon the gospel.

But we found those of our society that had been in Scotland had lost their simplicity and zeal for God; and, instead of that, spent all their time in disputing about this and the other doctrine. But blessed be God! He kept all in our regiment of one heart and of one mind. We were almost always in sight of the French, they watching our motions, and we theirs. Meantime provisions were both scarce and dear; but I did not now dare to plunder. We marched through orchards and vineyards, where there was plenty of fruit, which I knew would be taken away in a few hours. But as faint as I

was, I durst not touch it, because it was not my own.

All this campaign I had a solid dependence on God, and a thankful remembrance of all His mercies. And everything which I had I received as from the immediate hand of God. One day, as we were marching, the bread-wagons did not reach us in time; and we were in great want of bread and of all provisions, while, being on our march in sight of the enemy, we expected a battle every hour. We wanted water likewise; and here we saw the difference between them that feared God and them that did not. The latter cursed the king, and blasphemed God. And how did they groan and fret under their hardships! On the contrary, the former could cheerfully say, 'The will of the Lord be done.' My soul was more than usually happy, rejoicing in God my Saviour. I felt much love and pity to my poor fellow soldiers, and exhorted them to turn to God, and then they would find themselves happy under every trying circumstance.

As I was marching in the ranks I felt hunger bite hard, but had not a murmuring thought. I lifted up my heart to God, and knew He could supply all my wants. I had not gone far before I found a piece of brown bread, which I picked up, and received as out of the hand of God. We had but little rest: we kept Maestricht in our rear, as a place of retreat if needed. And all our provisions came that way. This the French knew, and laboured to cut off our communication with it. The season began to be cold, and the two armies were so near together that whichsoever

retreated first would be sure to suffer greatly. The French began to cut off our supplies. Prince Charles, observing this, thought it high time to prepare for a retreat into our winter quarters. So he ordered that a strong party should advance in front of the army, to keep the French in play, and make them believe he intended a general action. This consisted of two English regiments, whereof ours was one with some Hanoverians and some Dutch, making in the whole about twelve thousand men. On September 30 we had orders to hold ourselves in readiness, and after gun-firing to leave our tents standing, and march silently about a mile in the front of the camp. Prince Charles ordered our commander to go to such a distance and fortify his men; and to keep his post till further orders, or till he could keep it no longer.

We all thought the army was to cover us, in order to bring on a general engagement. But they were ordered to retreat, with our cannon and baggage, to the other side of the town. This was done by two o'clock the next day. We advanced according to order, after my companion had given me to understand that we were to be parted that day. As soon as we came to the place appointed, we were drawn up in line of battle. We English posted ourselves in some gardens and orchards, which were some little cover. At daybreak the whole French army advanced in seven or eight columns, all covered with horse on the right and left. They advanced slowly, while the Queen of Hungary's light horse and theirs skirmished between us and them. Here we lay, waiting for orders to

retreat to our army. But the prince forgot to send them, being busy with his cups and his ladies. So our brave general kept the field all day, in spite of the whole French army. I bless God I found no fear, but constant peace, and my spirit rejoiced in God. While we lay on our arms, I had both time and opportunity to reprove the wicked. And they would bear it now, and made great promises, if God should spare them, of becoming new men. By this time the French came very near us, and a cannon-ball came straight up our rank. But, as we were lying upon the ground, it went over our heads. We then had orders to stand up and fire. The right of the French being closely engaged with the Dutch, the French centre advanced and fired on us and the other English regiment. The rest of the French inclined to the right of us, in order to get round us. They quickly took our two pieces of cannon, and immediately turned them upon us. We were then ordered to retire with all speed into the plain, where we expected to find our own army. But they were far enough off, their general taking no thought for us.

All this time I found a constant waiting upon God. All fear was removed. I had no tremor on my spirits, and the presence of God was with me all the day long. My dear companion was on my right hand, and had been all the night. As we were both in the front rank, a musket-ball came and went through his leg. He fell down at my feet, looked up in my face with a smile, and said, 'My dear, I am wounded.' I and

another took him in our arms, and carried him out of the ranks while he was exhorting me to stand fast in the Lord. We laid him down, took our leave of him, and fell into our ranks again. In our farther retreat, I again met with my dear friend, who had received another ball through his thigh. But his heart was full of love, and his eyes full of heaven. I may justly say, 'Here fell a great Christian, a good soldier, a faithful friend.' I was obliged to leave him, for the French pressed hard upon us. Yet I was enabled to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.' I trust I have seen many that were perfected in love; but none so full of it as my dear companion. He was always cheerful, but never light; always in prayer, but a man of few words. Not a thoughtless look or an idle word could be observed in him. Even to this day, when I think of him it is both with pleasure and profit.

Night came on, but, the French still pressing upon us, we retreated all night, till we came near Maestricht. It rained very hard, being the 30th of September, and was exceedingly cold. Toward morning, being out of the reach of the French, we had orders to halt. We had no tents, and it continued raining: however, being well tired, I lay down on the wet ground, put my knapsack under my head, and soon fell fast asleep. In the morning we had orders to march and join the grand army. The small remains of those whose lives had been so vilely thrown away did so without delay.

But now I began to miss my companion. It seemed as if I had lost part of myself. I could have wished that I had died by his side; but I found I must look up, or I should sink into deep waters. I cried unto God and He heard my prayer, and turned my heaviness into joy. After a few days we marched to our winter quarters, which were at Bois-le-duc in Holland. About this time I received letters from my wife, begging me to apply for my discharge and she would send whatever money was wanting. I made this a matter of earnest prayer, and, after several steps, procured a promise from our colonel to discharge me for fifteen guineas. I wrote to my wife, and she sent a note, which was readily accepted. But in the meantime Colonel Philips sold his commission. Our new colonel consented to discharge me for the same sum, on condition I would be his servant till we came to England. But just at that time I fell ill of a fever, and orders came for our regiment to be clothed, and to take the field. But no clothing came for me, and my arms were taken from me. I was still very ill when the colonel told me he would set out for England in a few weeks: 'And if you are not able to go, I must leave you behind me.' This threw me into much heaviness; but I cried to the Lord, and He soon turned it into joy. The fever instantly left me, and by the time appointed I was able to attend on the colonel. My brethren and I spent great part of the night in commending each other to God. I attended the colonel to Helvoetsluys, went on board the packet, and landed at Harwich in eight-and-

forty hours; and on February 22, 1748, found my wife and all my friends well at Deptford.

About this time John Hyatt and I, with two more, being one night met together at the preaching-room, one Richardson, a sailor, who once ran well, but had for some time turned back to folly, earnestly desired to meet with us. The more we prayed for him, the more his sorrows increased; till his cries were so loud they almost drowned our voices. After the rest I began to pray a second time. He fell back, and began beating himself against the floor, so that we could hardly hold him down. I prayed on. Suddenly he gave a spring out of our hands, jumped up, clasped his hands, and cried out, 'He is come! He is come! Jesus is mine! My soul is happy!' By this many of the neighbours burst in, thinking we were killing one another. He went home rejoicing in the Lord, and in two or three days went to sea. But we never heard of him since. So I trust he is gone to paradise.

In the midst of much outward reproach, I now felt many inward conflicts. I found the remains of inward corruption, and earnestly longed to be delivered from them. So much the more were evil reports spread, even by good men who followed not with us; and I always observed the more devoted to God we were, the more did the enemy rage.

The disturbances at the time of preaching were now so great that I was obliged to apply to a magistrate. But after a few of the rioters were taken up, we had peace, and our congregation

increased. I then appointed a meeting on Thursday evenings, wherein I read part of one of your sermons. Some of your preachers likewise came down from London, and the congregations increased so that the room could not contain them. I consulted you. You advised me to get a piece of ground, and build. I immediately opened a subscription, and having procured ground desired three builders to give in their proposals. This was in the year 1757. As soon as the building was finished (which with the galleries cost two hundred and twenty-five pounds), I paid the master-builder what I could, and offered him a note for the rest. He said, 'No; your word is sufficient.' I was also in debt to my mealmen; yet I durst not withhold my hand from the cause of God and the poor, though I stood alone, not having one to help or stand engaged with me.

It was about six years before I could discharge this debt: I then gave up the lease to you. I had for some time had thoughts of preaching, but they were now stronger than ever. So I gave now and then a few words of exhortation, and I was so engaged herein I could not retreat. Whenever I thought of desisting I was unhappy. I then made it matter of earnest prayer till I durst delay no longer; but, with much fear and trembling, undertook to preach on those nights when the preachers did not come, though my fear was so great that it sometimes affected my body. For some time I preached at Deptford only; but on my signifying my desires to you, you accepted me, and gave me a little to do in town.

My time was now fully employed. I had my own business to mind, together with that of the society. I was preacher, steward, visitor of the sick, and leader of the bands and classes. Meantime I had many reproaches, both from others and from our own people. But God blessed me in all these things and gave me to see some fruit of my labour ; for from time to time some were convinced of sin, and others justified. And, indeed, had it not been for this encouragement I could not have continued to preach.

In the year 1760 both my labours and my trials increased. I was made one of the four constables of our parish ; and on October 27 I was sent for to the bench to be sworn in. Many laughed, and many gazed at me as a monster ; but my soul was composed and happy in God. When they called me to take the oath I told them, 'I cannot in conscience.' One from the bench cried out, 'Fine him twenty pounds, and he will swear anything.' I answered him, 'No, sir, not for twenty worlds.' After many more words, the chairman said, 'Mr. Staniforth, shall I make an oath for you ? ' I said, 'Sir, if you please.' He then proposed the following, to which I had no objection : 'Sampson Staniforth, of the parish of Greenwich, is by us appointed to serve the office of constable for one year in the best manner he can, according to his own way of thinking.'

When we were dismissed I gave my partners to understand that I should be punctual in the execution of my office. And one of them being a great swearer, I told him, 'You must not swear

before me, as I will make you pay for it.' When the Quarter Sessions came on, the high-constable summoned all the constables in the hundred (four-and-twenty) to meet. When I came into the room, one and another cried out, 'No swearing now!' After dinner they drank the king's health, which I drank; and a second, which I drank in water. The next man cried with a loud voice, 'Here is Dr. Squintum's health.' When it came to me I stopped, and he said, 'What, Mr. Staniforth, will you not drink that health?' I answered, 'I pray God to bless that good man and give him health and length of days.' I then left the room. And from that time they left me to do just as I would. This was a trying year; but God enabled me to give satisfaction to the parish, while I found His presence always with me, and my soul prospered much. I was the next year overseer of the poor; but I had three good partners, and passed through the year with great ease.

About this time I had a remarkable deliverance. There was a heavy brick building belonging to my house and that of my neighbour. Just as I came out of it one day it fell down: had it been a minute sooner, I should have been buried in the ruins.

It was now that the great revival of the work of God began. Observing some wildfire mixed with that holy and heavenly flame, I endeavoured gently to check it both in public and private, exhorting all to keep close to the written word; to hold fast whatever was agreeable to the Scriptures, and let all the rest go.

In the year 1764 I was sent for by Mr. (Maxfield) to his house. The messenger told me he wanted to speak with me, and I must come immediately. When I came I found the Grecian bishop[1] with him, who ordained me and three more. But, finding it would offend my brethren, I have never availed myself of it to this hour.

God now gave me, what I had so long desired, to owe no man anything; and I went on cheerfully, though not without many temptations, both within and without. But I still resolved to lay out myself and my substance for the cause of God and the good of souls. And He was still pleased to give me some tokens for good, both in preaching and visiting the sick.

There now came into our neighbourhood one Mr. B., a Dissenting minister, a man of strong sense and great learning. He applied to me to serve him with bread. He was open and free in his conversation, but of a warm temper. He often called upon me, and we commonly got into dispute, particularly about original sin and justification, in which I always found great freedom of speech and enlargement of heart. One night he stayed to supper; and as he declined it, I asked a blessing, concluding as usual with 'for the sake of Jesus Christ.' Observing he smiled, I said after supper, 'Sir, is it not for His sake that we receive every blessing?' This introduced a warm dispute, till he rose up in a great

[1] Erasmus, Bishop of Arcadia in Crete, who ordained two of Wesley's preachers—John Jones and Thomas Bryant.—Tyerman's *Wesley*, ii. 487.

rage, and, striking his hand upon the table, said, 'I expect no more benefit from the blood of Christ than from the blood of a bull.' From this time we did not converse together, till he fell sick, and was visited by Mr. Dornford.[1] He asked him whether he knew Mr. Staniforth, and begged he would send me to him. Mr. Dornford told me; but before he spoke a letter came, desiring me to come immediately. He received me with great kindness. I spoke to him of the nature and necessity of repentance, and showed it was needful to feel our original corruption as well as our actual sins. While I was speaking the tears ran down his cheeks, and my soul was much drawn out to God for him. I asked, 'Shall I go to prayer?' He said, 'By all means; and may God hear your prayer!' Afterwards he said, 'Dear Mr. Staniforth, my time is short: be with me as much as you can.' This was Thursday. On Friday I went again both morning and afternoon. I spoke closely to him, and repeated what he said at my house. He said, 'I thank God and you that I see my error. O, pray for me!' On Saturday likewise I was with him twice, and

[1] Wesley visited Mr. Dornford on December 1, 1789, and on January 17, 1790, 'buried Mrs. Dornford (a good woman), and preached her funeral sermon' (*Journal*; see *Works*, xiii. 126). Charles Wesley, who travelled with him to Cambridge on November 5, 1756, describes him as 'faithful John Dornford.' Later, when on his way to Shoreham, he 'breakfasted at Greenwich with Brother Dornford, once a witness of his own perfection, but now very tame and sober-minded.' On the return next day 'Jack Perronet accompanied me to Brother Staniforth's in Greenwich. His wife is just ready for the bridegroom. We met for the better here also' (*Letters*, ii. 245).

he felt more and more the need of a Saviour. I then said, 'Christ must be equal with the Father, or He cannot atone for our sins.' He answered, 'He is; and I believe He is able to save all that come to God through Him.' We then prayed to Him with joy and confidence, and praised God together. On Sunday I was with him twice. The second time (which was about eight in the evening) he said he should live but a few hours. I asked, 'What is the ground of your hope of heaven?' He replied, 'The mercy of God, through the merits of my dear Redeemer; and my soul is happy in Him.' I said, 'Then your sentiments are greatly changed.' He said, 'Yes; blessed be God for His grace, and you as His instrument. I now know there is no way of salvation but through Jesus Christ.' He kissed my hand, and about eight hours after gave up his soul to God.

I now began to be more employed in and about London. Every Sunday morning I walked thither to meet the preachers, and to know my appointments. I had six miles to walk all weathers; and in the winter to go and come in the dark, as I was always in town at eight in the morning, and took care to be at every place where I was appointed. And I had many sweet hours of communion with God as I walked by the way. I made it a rule, from the beginning to this day, to bear my own expenses. This cost me ten or twelve pounds a year, and I bless God I can bear it. Beside meeting the class and band and visiting the sick, I preach five or six times in the week. And the Lord gives me to rejoice

in that I can still say, 'These hands have ministered to my necessities.'

In the year 1771 we began preaching at Rotherhithe. I went in my turn, and found my heart much united to the people. So was theirs to me. The place we preached in being both dear and inconvenient, they thought of building, and applied to me concerning it. I laid the case before you. You encouraged me to go on; and said you could not do much, but you would help me as far as you could. I took a piece of ground, and set the workmen about the building, which cost in all near two hundred pounds. For this I alone stood engaged. I lent upwards of a hundred pounds, and was near eight years before I could get the building entirely out of debt. I still constantly preach there once a week, and every first Sunday in the month. I soon saw some fruit of my labours here also. W. C. being convinced of sin, and under the afflicting hand of God, I desired our friends, both at Rotherhithe and Deptford, to set apart a day of prayer on his behalf. God heard the prayer, restored him to his right mind, and filled his heart with love. About the same time Samuel Gibbs was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. He was afterwards settled at Snowsfields, and became eminently useful. He died happy in January, 1781, and I preached his funeral sermon.

I was still frequently tempted to leave off preaching; but generally when the temptation was strongest I was informed of another and another that had received a blessing. Glory be to God, who does not send us a warfare at our

own cost ! I was now likewise blessed in temporal things, having enough both to answer all demands. and, if I was called away, to leave a little to my wife, who has for many years laboured under a severe asthma, and been thereby cut off from all the public means of grace. For her sake I began to preach in my own house every Monday evening. And hereby I have reason to believe some good has been done to others also. Several of my neighbours come to hear me, send for me when they are sick, and will do nothing in the way of charity without me.

About this time I had several invitations to leave the Connexion : one offered me forty pounds a year, another fifty ; urging that I might hereby save myself much fatigue as well as considerable expense. But whenever I thought closely upon the subject, three objections occurred : (1) It was clear God had blessed me in this way, therefore I was afraid to go out of it ; (2) I saw how much hurt had been done in the society by these separations ; and (3) as to money or ease, my heart is not set on money, and I am not weary of my labour. So upon the coolest reflection I can still say, and that with full purpose of heart, 'This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God.'

What farther God has for me to do in His cause, and for the good of souls, I know not. But I trust He will enable me to be more thankful for every mercy, more faithful to grace given, and more fruitful in those few days which He may please to add to my life.

My present method is : I pray with my wife

before I go out in the morning, and at breakfast time with my family and all that are in the house ; the former part of the day I spend in my business ; my spare hours in reading and private exercises. Most evenings I preach, so that I am seldom at home before nine o'clock ; but though I am so much out at nights, and generally alone, God keeps me both from evil men and evil spirits. And many times I am as fresh when I come in at night as I was when I went out in the morning. I conclude the day in reading the Scriptures and in praying with my family.

I am now in the sixty-third year of my age ; and, glory be to God ! I am not weary of well-doing. I find my desires after God stronger than ever ; my understanding is more clear in the things of God ; and my heart is united more than ever both to God and His people. I know their religion and mine is the gift of God through Christ, and the work of God by His Spirit. It is revealed in Scripture, and is received and retained by faith, in the use of all gospel ordinances. It consists in an entire deadness to the world, and to our own will ; and an entire devotedness of our souls, bodies, time, and substance to God through Christ Jesus. In other words, it is the loving the Lord our God with all our hearts and all mankind for God's sake. This arises from a knowledge of His love to us : 'We love Him because we know He first loved us' ; a sense of which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us. From the little hereof that I have experienced, I know he that experiences this religion is a happy man. Two

verses in one of our hymns exactly describe what I now feel, and what I desire :

If so poor a worm as I
May to Thy great glory live,
All my actions sanctify,
All my words and thoughts receive !
Claim me for Thy service, claim
All I have, and all I am.

Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel :
All I think, and speak, and do :
Take my heart,—but make it new !

Thus, rev. and dear sir, I have given you a little sketch of God's dealings with me. May the Lord bless you with length of days and much happiness ! So prays

Your much obliged son and servant
in the gospel,
SAMPSON STANIFORTH.

In the *Methodist Magazine*, 1799 (p. 461), the following account is given of Mr. Staniforth's last days :

After he gave up his business Mr. Staniforth removed from Deptford to Shoreham, at the desire of the pious and venerable Mr. Perronet, where he was made very useful among the little flock in that place ; but he returned to Deptford, to his old friends, a few years back, where he spent a great part of his time in visiting the sick and the poor, and such as were in distress. Those

who were in want he relieved according to his ability. He was a man who for many years had the glory of God in view, and the salvation of souls very much at heart; and he spared no pains in gathering poor wandering sinners into the fold of Christ, and encouraging those who were brought in to press forward towards the mark, that they might obtain the prize of their high calling. He was of a remarkably calm, mild temper, and of a peaceable and healing spirit, and was exceedingly useful in promoting peace and love among the people. He has long been a father to the Deptford society, as well as to some others in that neighbourhood.

When the infirmities of age came upon him he bore them with entire resignation to the will of that God whose mercy and love in Christ Jesus he had long and so largely experienced. And when visited with affliction (which he frequently was for several years before his death) he possessed his soul in patience, and looked to the hour of his dissolution with joyful expectation of being for ever with the Lord. He was neither molested with gloomy doubts, nor painful fears, nor was the enemy of souls permitted to distress him. But as his heart stood fast, believing in the Lord, so his evidence for heaven continued unclouded to the last moment of life. He said to a dear friend, a few days before his happy spirit took its flight, 'I think my experience may be all summed up in these few words—

In the heavenly Lamb,
Thrice happy I am;
And my heart it doth dance at the sound of His name.

The night before he died a friend was sent for to wake with and attend upon him, who, when he came into his room, asked Mr. Staniforth how he was. He replied, 'I am exceedingly ill, and I thought I was going home.' He then repeated many particular passages from our hymns, and among the rest the following:

O for a heart to praise my God.
A heart from sin set free!
A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely spilt for me!

And soon after:

My God, I am Thine,
What a comfort divine,
What a blessing, to know that my Jesus is mine!

And added, 'Oh, what a mercy to have God to go to in a time of trouble!' Seeing his servant standing by, he said, 'Seek the Lord while He may be found, and hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast to the end. The Lord bless you! May all the blessings which the Lord poured out upon the head of Joseph be poured out upon you!' and very soon after he calmly and quietly breathed his last.

Thus died Sampson Staniforth, who had steadily walked with God for nearly sixty years. He preached the gospel for almost fifty years, and finished his course in the seventy-ninth year of his age. The little property he had left, having no children, he gave by will to his relatives. But it was remarked by many that not one of his Christian friends was invited to his funeral.

yet the preachers in town willingly attended him to the grave, though not invited; so did several of those who loved him from Deptford; and the society showed their affection for their deceased and faithful minister by putting the whole chapel in mourning on the occasion. So exceedingly little do distant relations in general think themselves obliged to their deceased friends for anything they leave behind them. How much more commendable is it to dispose of our property at death for the honour of God, as He inclined us to do while living!

EXTEMPORE LINES[1]

ON THE DEATH OF MR. SAMPSON STANIFORTH, OF DEPTFORD

SAMPSON, in youth—like the unbroken steed—
With British soldiers, ranked in flaming red,
To Flanders marched to meet the Gallic foe:—
'Twas there the youth first learned himself to know.
Back to his native country he returns;
A different flame now in his bosom burns.
Discharged from Royal William's[2] loyal band,
Enlists, in Jesu's nobler ranks to stand.
No changeling he—firm in his Master's cause;
A Bible-Christian, subject to its laws;
A soldier, husband, Christian, man of worth,
Such died the venerable STANIFORTH.

G. W.

[1] *Methodist Magazine*, 1799, p. 608.
[2] William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, 1721–1765.

CHRISTOPHER HOPPER[1]

I WAS born at Low-Coalburne, in the parish of Ryton, in the county of Durham, on December 25, 1722. Moses Hopper, my father, was a farmer; my mother, whose name was Ann, was daughter to George Barkiss, farmer, in the same county. They were both of good repute, and much attached to the Church of England, but strangers to vital religion.

My mother had nine children—six sons and three daughters—of whom I was the youngest. When I was about five years old I was sent to school to one Mr. Alderson, a man of piety and good understanding, who taught those under his care not only the branches of learning he professed, but the fear of God and the first principles of religion. He catechized us twice every week, and made us attend the church every Lord's Day and all holidays appointed for public service. After I had learned to read, write, and understand a little of the mathematics, I lost my beloved master, who made a most awful exit. He had

[1] From *Arminian Magazine*, January, February, March, 1781; and 1802, p. 395. Wesley suggested this autobiography in a letter dated February 16, 1780. 'Why should not you write an account of *your* life?'—*Works*, xii. 318.

been, as I thought, more devout one week than common. The Sabbath following he received the sacrament at Ryton church. Some days after, a few gentlemen, with fair words, persuaded him to play a civil game at cards; but afterwards he fell into great distress of mind and could not properly attend his school, which was often left to the care of his eldest son and me. The spring following, after many sore conflicts, he sunk into deep despair, and then drowned himself.

This melancholy event made my heart tremble, and was a means of bringing some serious thoughts into my mind about heaven, hell, death, and judgement. I began to distinguish between vice and virtue, the godly and ungodly men. These impressions remained till I took a severe illness, which continued near two years, and reduced me to a mere skeleton. Mr. Foster, an eminent apothecary, who attended me, pronounced me incurable.

This alarmed me, and filled my heart with slavish fear. I judged it was high time to prepare for a future state, and according to the light I had began the business without delay. I read my Bible with much pleasure, prayer, and attention: the more I read it, the more I loved it. Many verses, and some favourite chapters whch I understood best, made such a deep impression upon me that I soon had them by heart. The *Practice of Piety*, *A Form of Prayers*, and a *Psalm Book* were my library. I prayed and sung with fear, and some degree of joy. I had very slight notions of my depraved

nature and the sin of unbelief, but clear views of my actual transgressions. I had been addicted to swear when I was put out of humour, and to lie when I could gain anything by it or cover or excuse a fault. I had been apt to pilfer among the children when I could do it with a good grace.

I was very proud, and prone to anger; yea, of a cruel disposition. I took a diabolical pleasure in hanging dogs, worrying cats, and killing birds and insects, mangling and cutting them to pieces. One instance of my inhumanity I perfectly remember to this day: One evening, as I was returning from school with some of my friendly associates, we found a great number of frogs collected together in a marshy place. We proclaimed war against them: we armed ourselves with stones, and with all the fury of little fiends, murdered the poor, innocent, defenceless creatures. We then left the field in great triumph; but God soon requited me. That night I dreamed I fell into a deep place full of frogs, and they seized on me from head to foot and began to eat the flesh off my bones. I was in great terror, and found exquisite pain until I awoke, sweating and trembling, and half dead with fear.

About this time my dear father died of consumption—I hope a true penitent. He was interred at Ryton church, with great solemnity, among his ancestors. I was then left to the care of my indulgent mother and brethren. Soon after my father's death my eldest brother married, and they divided my father's farm and the

goods and chattels he left amongst them: but I was neglected and overlooked like one that did not belong to the family; but this did not give me the least concern. My disorder still continued with my convictions. I prayed, wept, and looked towards the hill of Sion. I found comfort, and a good hope through grace. I waited every day for my final dissolution, and longed to be with Christ. I loved God, the Redeemer, and all mankind. I was happy. After some time it pleased God to restore me to perfect health, beyond all human expectation. After my recovery my mind was quickly drawn after the world again. I saw transitory objects in another point of view than I had done during the time of my illness. My love to God and religion, and my desires after another world, soon grew very cold. I quenched the Holy Spirit, who departed, and left me again to the folly of my own heart.

As I was the youngest child of the family, and had nothing left me, I judged it would be proper to think of some business to procure bread; and my mother and brother being willing to put me to the grammar-school and give me a good education, I accepted the offer, and concluded it was the best thing I could do; but, in the interim, one Mr. Armstrong, a shopkeeper, wanted a boy, and sent for me. I embraced the opportunity, and prepared to go without delay. I thought I should escape the wearisome task of study, having nothing to do but to improve the learning I had already to qualify me for a merchant's apprentice. My

mother accompanied me to Mr. Armstrong's, and put me in possession of my new place. I went with great pleasure, and met with a kind reception. After I had been some time on trial, I was to be bound by indenture for seven years. This put my youthful mind into a new chain of reasoning. I thought I would never be bound to stand so long behind a counter: therefore, in spite of all persuasion, I left my place, and returned home.

After this a project entered into my head that I would be a musician. I told my brother; he approved of it, bought me a violin, and provided me a master. I began with great assiduity, and concluded I had found the very thing that would make me happy. I played away all my convictions, lost my taste for spiritual things, and banished all thoughts of a future world. I now employed myself in doing some little things in the house and about the farm; and all the time I had to spare I spent in playing, singing, dancing, fishing, fowling, and whatever came next to my hand. I was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age, and began to think of some employment whereby I might have money to support my foolish desires. My brother kept wagon-horses. When the wagon-ways were first framed between the new coal-mines and the river Tyne, the farmers were under an obligation to their landlords to employ a certain number of horses for that purpose. I was a strong, active young man, and thought I could manage a wagon very well. My brother was willing I should make the trial, and gave me a proper horse for that

service. I soon made a great proficiency in this slavish and dangerous occupation, and I was hugely pleased with my new department. Novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a throne or a dunghill. I frequently boasted of my strength, agility, and skill in this sphere of action, and thought I was arrived at the summit of my preferment. I found it a singular pleasure, in whatever company I was, to talk of feeding and guiding wagon-horses, of wagons and wagon-ways, the nature and value of coals; and concluded I only wanted a little money to make me a fitter or a London crimp. My vain mind was as much taken up with those things as the mathematicians with their abstruse science, or the philosophers with the wonders of nature. I followed this business, and the various branches of agriculture, for about five years. During this period of my life I was given up to folly. I greedily pursued, according to my ability, all the pleasures of the world. I spent nights and days together in hunting, cocking, card-playing, horse-races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country; and, O grief of heart! gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics, and peasants made up the crowd. But in the enjoyment of these poor toys I had many severe checks and sorrowful moments. The universe appeared as a vault, wherein true comfort was entombed, and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. I often said in my cool intervals, 'Hath the great God of love provided no better things than these for His reasonable creatures?' Now, at this time I was my own master, and

lived without control. I followed my former pleasures, but with a trembling hand. I found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly objects empty and vain.

In this dull, melancholy round I dragged on for some time, without any real comfort or solid satisfaction. I was not happy; yet I believed there was something that could make me so, but I knew not what it was, or where to find it. Sometimes I reflected on what I felt in my affliction when I was a youth; but it appeared as a dream. I was frequently in great and imminent danger; but through the interposition of a kind, unerring Providence, I escaped ten thousand snares and deaths, by night and day, at home and abroad. One evening in particular, two of my companions and I were riding home in a wagon very jovially, and as we were passing over a high battery the horse started suddenly to one side, and snatched the wagon from the planks: immediately it overset, and turned over and over to the bottom of the hill. The trembling spectators who beheld this awful event concluded, with shrieks and cries, 'They are all killed; their bones are broken in a thousand pieces.' But, to their great astonishment, and our unspeakable comfort, we were very little hurt.

After I had recovered my reason, and found I was alive and out of hell, my stubborn heart yielded to my Almighty Deliverer. I feared His great name, wept for joy, and was overwhelmed with grief for my folly. This deliverance wrought a deep conviction in my heart. The true light shined on my dark soul, and God laid me in the

dust. I only wanted a spiritual guide to show me the way; but, alas! I could not find him in the country.

In May, 1742, we heard a strange report of one Wesley, a Church clergyman, that had been at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and had preached in Sandgate to many thousands, who heard him with astonishment.[1] This new thing made a huge noise. The populace entertained various conjectures about him; but few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in a great consternation. Some time after his brother Charles came, and preached at Tanfield Cross. I ran with the multitude to hear this strange preacher. When I saw a man in a clergyman's habit, preaching at a public cross to a large auditory, some gaping, some laughing, and some weeping, I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded some said, 'He is a good man, and is sent to reform our land'; others said, 'Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts.' I said, 'If he is a good man, good will be done, and it is plain we want a reformation; but if he is an impostor, he can only leave us as he found us, that is, without hope and without God in the world.' I cannot tell what induced me to go so far; but I found I was in danger of being called a Methodist, and was glad to dismiss the conversation with a smile and a piece of drollery.

In November Mr. Wesley returned to Newcastle,

[1] See Wesley's *Journal*, May 30, 1742

formed a religious society, and laid the foundation of the Orphan House. At the same time he visited Tanfield-Leigh, Wickham, Swalwell, and Horsley. His name was then well known in town and country.

All mouths were filled with Wesley and his followers; some for and many against them. I knew very little of the matter, but thought it was most prudent to join the general voice against this 'new way.'

The spring following, 1743, John Brown, a plain farmer, removed from Tanfield-Leigh to the Low-Spenn, and invited Mr. Wesley to his house. I then heard occasionally those preachers, who, I thought, could tell their story well, without stammering; but still found much fault with this strange method of proceeding. At this time there was a great clamour about religion among all sects and parties, and I made a bustle among the rest. I said, 'I will read my Bible, say my prayers, go to my own parish church, reform my life, and be good and pious, without the scandal of the cross.' Alas! I did not consider, 'No cross, no crown.'

I hobbled on in this lame, ignorant manner, till at last I became deeply serious. I saw there was more in religion than I enjoyed or understood. I saw that God had been striving with me from my infant days. I looked back with astonishment on His loud calls, compassionate helps, tender mercies, and great deliverances. He had raised me from the gates of death when all human help failed. He had saved me from perils and dangers by night and

by day. He had richly provided for me when I was left to myself very young. A sight of these favours raised in my cold heart some sensations of gratitude to my bountiful Benefactor. I said in my heart, 'Shall I still trifle with the Almighty God of heaven and earth? Shall I fly in the face of my infinite Creator? Shall I play with eternal things? Will God always strive with the children of men? My few days are passing away like a shadow; pale death is approaching; the Judge is standing at the door; eternity, eternity, is come. Alas! I am not ready. I am in my sins, unholy, unhappy, and therefore not prepared to die. I will now cry to God for mercy. He willeth not the death of a sinner. It is His pleasure to save me from sin, and the punishment due to it. He waits to be gracious, that His great name may be exalted. "He is good to all, and His mercy is over all His works." I am a monument of His sparing goodness; I will therefore look up, and hope in His word. Behold, this is the accepted time; behold, this is the day of salvation. God hath sent His servants to show poor sinners the way of life.' I was then determined to hear and judge for myself. God had now prepared my heart for the reception of the truth. I said, 'I will no longer be led by the laughing multitude, nor be deluded with the noise of vain tongues.'

The Sabbath day following Mr. Reeves preached at the Low-Spenn, at one o'clock in the afternoon. I heard him with great attention, but found a veil on my heart. I did not clearly

see God's method of justifying a guilty sinner through faith in the blood of His Son.

In the evening he preached again, on these words, 'And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.' In his plain, pathetic manner he gave us a definition of these principal graces, with their inseparable concomitants, and showed the unspeakable happiness of all those who had a saving faith, a good hope, and the love of God. The word came home to my heart with energy. The veil was removed. The true light shined upon me; and I said, 'Alas! I am undone. If these things are true, and doubtless they are, I have only the faith of a devil, the hope of a hypocrite, and the love of this present evil world.' My mouth was stopped. I stood guilty before God. He discovered to me the blessed plan of man's redemption through the blood of a crucified Saviour. I saw God had fulfilled His great original promise. He sent His Son to save sinners, the chief of sinners. He lived, suffered, and died for a lost world. 'He tasted death for every man. He gave Himself a ransom for all.' I said in my trouble, 'The good Shepherd came from heaven to earth "to seek and save that which was lost, to bring again that which was driven away, to bind up that which was broken, and to strengthen that which was sick." But I am lost; I am driven to the mouth of hell, ready to drop into the flames; I am broken to pieces; I am sick of sin, sick of myself, and sick of a vain world: I will therefore look unto the Lord. My God will hear me; He hath

died for me. I shall, yea, doubtless, I shall obtain mercy after all I have done. The God of truth hath promised mercy; the Son of His love hath procured mercy; the Spirit of truth is ready to reveal mercy; and the messengers of peace are come to proclaim mercy, free mercy, to every perishing sinner, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.' I said, 'I can, I will, I do believe in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. I am freely justified. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. God is now my God in Christ. The love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me. The spirit of bondage is gone. The Spirit of adoption is come. I can now cry, "Abba, Father." The same Spirit beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No enmity; no wrath; no curse; no condemnation: the ruined sinner is saved.' I then found a glorious and undeniable change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to His yoke, to His cross, to His saints, and to His friends and enemies. I said, 'This is Bible religion, scriptural Christianity; let men call it what they please—"a delusion," "enthusiasm," "Methodism," or "Mahometanism"—that is nothing to me; hard names do not change the nature of the thing.' I then went on my way rejoicing—a wonder to my father's family, to all that knew me, and to myself. All my idols fell to the ground before the ark of

God. I found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it.

The whole tenor of my life and conversation was new. Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love made the change. My heart, my tongue, my hands, were now, in my little way, employed for my loving God. I was no longer of the world; therefore the world began immediately to hate me. Some said, 'Ah! what think you? Christopher Hopper is converted.' Others said, 'He hath received the Holy Ghost.' Others said, 'He is mad; keep far from him; come not near his habitation.' Some, of a more compassionate turn, pitied me; but all agreed I had renounced my baptism, left the Church, and was in a dangerous situation.

Soon after Mr. Wesley came to Low-Spenn, formed a little society, and made me a leader, to help and watch over them. I was but a novice, a young, raw disciple, unskilled in the word of righteousness; but faith in Christ, and the love of God in my heart, overcame all the powers of darkness. I found unspeakable pleasure in doing and suffering the will of God. I laboured diligently with my hands; I owed no man anything; I had enough for myself, and a little to spare for others. I attended four or five meetings every week; we prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the Bible, and exhorted one another to fear and love God. The power of the Lord was present to heal; He owned His own work, and gave us prosperity. Many of my old companions were awakened; also my poor old mother, one of my sisters, and one of

my brothers, who had been a champion in the devil's cause, but has been an ornament to religion from that time to this day.[1] The fire now kindled, and the flame spread. I had one invitation after another, to High-Spenn, Barlow, Woodside, Prudhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places.

As yet, I had not examined my call to preach the gospel, nor considered the consequences of such an undertaking. I was sweetly carried on with a strong prevailing influence, and a loving desire to promote the glory of God. I saw the world dead in trespasses and sins, void of light, holiness, and happiness. I therefore thirsted after their salvation, and thought it my duty to promote it. God blessed His word. Sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. But the devil was highly displeased. He saw his kingdom was in danger, and immediately proclaimed war against me.

I met with great persecution, many discouragements, and much opposition in every place. Men of all ranks used their power and influence to stop this blessed work of God. They spoke all manner of evil against the work, and the instruments employed therein. They dispensed with two or three awakened clergymen tolerably well: these were regularly ordained, men of learning, gentlemen, and divines; but to see a ploughman, or an honest mechanic, stand up to preach the gospel, it was insufferable. Hell was moved from beneath; a council was called; the edict came forth, and war commenced.

[1] He died in the Lord some years ago.—C.H

Laymen and ecclesiastics joined heart and hand to suppress these pestilent fellows—not with acts of kindness, Scripture, or reason, but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels: these were Satan's arguments in vindication of his own cause. It was the common cry in town and country, 'Press them for soldiers; send them on board a man-of-war; transport them; beat them; stone them; send them to prison, or knock out their brains and dispatch them at once; for there is no law for them.'[1]

Several of my fellow sufferers had shared honest John Nelson's fate already; and I expected to be the next. They had their eyes on me; they daily pursued me as Saul did David; they waited for an opportunity to seize on the prey: but the hand of the Lord was with me, so I escaped. He delivered me by various means, at sundry times, and often in a very remarkable manner.

Once in particular, as I was preaching at Wickham, to a quiet, attentive congregation, the constable came with his attendants to apprehend me; they guarded the door, and stood with fierce impatience to seize me. When I had concluded I stepped down, went through the midst of them, was conveyed through a window, and went quietly home, leaving the peace-officer and his gentlemen to end the dispute with loud words, hard blows, and bloody faces.

[1] This was a great mistake: there was law for us; but we could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force.—C.H

When I first set out to do all the good I could, without fee or reward, I did not foresee this violent storm. I began now to consider what latitude I was in; and whether it would not be a point of wisdom to tack about, and steer for some quiet harbour.

There had been many things said and written against this 'new way,' especially against those illiterate preachers who so exceedingly disturbed the world. I found some doubts concerning my call to the work, and almost wished they might be well grounded, that I might with a good conscience desist from preaching.

I was therefore determined to examine myself, whether I had a right to preach, or whether I had rashly entered into a work that did not belong to me. One evening I went into a wood by the side of Derwent-water, much dejected. Clouds and darkness surrounded me, and my spirit was troubled within me. I said, 'My enemies are too strong for me; there are few on the Lord's side, but myriads against Him. What shall I do? Alas! "My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." "I am a worm, and no man." O my God, let me enjoy this sweet solitude, and see my friends and companions no more! Let me live as a hermit in this lonely desert, till my few days are ended; then shall my weary spirit be at rest.'

I did not want ease, wealth, or honour, but to know, do, and suffer the will of my Lord and Master. I thought, 'If I have made a mistake, God will forgive me, and I will take shame to

myself. I will desist from preaching, and live and die a private Christian. But if God hath called me to publish the gospel of His dear Son, I must bear a public testimony, and leave the event to Him.'

In the midst of these reflections it occurred to my mind, 'What evidence is sufficient to satisfy me in this weighty matter? I only want a rational, scriptural evidence. Let me, then, inquire, with prayer and fasting, what reason have I to believe that I am called to preach the gospel?'

(1) I have heard and believed the gospel, and found it to be the power of God to the salvation of my own soul (Rom. i. 16), and I believe it to be the powerful means which God hath appointed to reclaim and save lost sinners. (2) I believe all power is given to Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth; therefore He alone hath power and authority to call, qualify, and thrust out labourers into His own harvest (Matt. xxviii. 18). Hence I learn that this power cannot be acquired by human art or learning, or purchased with gold or silver (Acts viii. 20). (3) I believe those who are called and put into this work by Him shall turn sinners from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God (Acts xxvi. 18). (4) I have a rational conviction that God hath committed unto me the word of reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 19). I have this treasure in an earthen vessel, in a feeble, mortal body (2 Cor. iv. 7); that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man. I find, by daily experience, 'we are not sufficient of ourselves to think

anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God' (2 Cor. iii. 5). (5) According to this conviction I have preached the gospel to sinners dead in sin, and they have been awakened and converted to God. Children of the devil are become children of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Having considered these things, I concluded my call to preach the gospel was consistent with Scripture, reason, and experience. I was filled with joy. I said, 'I have now the countenance of my God; the hands of His dear Son, the Bishop of my soul, laid upon me; the approbation of three presbyters sent by Him; the prayers of His dear people; the testimony of a good conscience, and the pleasure of seeing Sion prosper. I therefore pray earnestly that God may incline, persuade, and sweetly influence my heart, and open my mouth by His Holy Spirit, to dispense the word of truth to a world of perishing sinners. This I desire to do continually, in season and out of season, according to the ability He hath given me.' My drooping spirit now revived. The fear of men and devils departed from me, and I set out with double courage. I could say, 'Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?' Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 'Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.' My heart replied, 'For Sion's sake, I will not hold my peace; and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness

thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.' The Lord was with me night and day; His threatenings passed over me; His promises comforted me; and His precepts were my delight. I could say:

> To me, with Thy dear name, is given
> Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.

In the year 1744 I taught a school at Barlow in the parish of Ryton. My time was employed six days in teaching the children under my care the branches of learning I professed, and the first principles of Christianity.

I spent every Sabbath, and all my vacant hours, in preaching, reading, praying, visiting the sick, and conversing with all that Providence put in my way. God was with me, and blessed my weak labours. Sinners were converted, believers multiplied, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour.

But Satan did not like this work: therefore he stirred up the rector of Ryton and his curate, with those under their influence, to prevent me. They gave me first hard words, and then hard blows.

In a little time I was summoned to appear in the Spiritual Court at Durham, to answer for my conduct. I did not know what I had done; but was soon informed that I was impeached for teaching a school without a licence; and, what was still worse, for calling sinners to repentance, and warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come—an offence that cannot be overlooked by men who know not God! But

God raised me up friends, who stood by me, and defended my cause against all my adversaries.

After this troublesome affair was ended I met with a trial of another kind. Before I was awakened I was deeply in love with one Jane Richardson, a farmer's daughter, and an agreeable young woman. She was my first love, and had laid fast hold on my youthful heart. She had every accomplishment I wanted but religion! Alas! she was unacquainted with God. This was a bar indeed! I found a desire to break off all correspondence with her, but was afraid she could not bear it. I was greatly troubled, and prayed for divine direction. God was pleased to hear and grant my request. She was soon awakened, and found peace with God. All objections being removed, on May 28, 1745, we were joined together in Ryton church. She was a loving wife, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made my joys and sorrows her own. We worshipped God in spirit and truth, and rejoiced in the Son of His love.

The same evening I preached at the Low-Spenn. The Lord was with us, and we praised His name together. We lived a few months with my wife's friends at the Smeals, near Derwent, in a most loving, agreeable manner. God made us of one heart and mind, and united our souls together by one spirit in humble love.

In the year 1746 I removed from Barlow to the preaching-house at Sheephill. I received the preachers and my other religious friends with much pleasure. My heart was open, my door was open, and my little table free for strangers. I gave

up my soul, body, and substance to my adorable Saviour, and grieved I had no more to give.

I commonly preached, or met a class, every evening after I had dismissed my scholars. I preached twice or thrice, and often four times, every Sabbath day. When I had a day or two to spare from my present vocation, I visited Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and many other towns and villages, ten, twenty, or thirty miles round. Herein I met with much opposition, and was frequently in great jeopardy. Indeed, I did not much regard a little dirt, a few rotten eggs, the sound of a cow's horn, the noise of bells, or a few snowballs in their season; but sometimes I was saluted with blows, stones, brickbats, and bludgeons. These I did not well like: they were not pleasing to flesh and blood.

I sometimes lost a little skin, and once[1] a little blood, which was drawn from my forehead with a sharp stone. I wore a patch a few days, and was not ashamed; I gloried in the cross. And when my small sufferings abounded for the sake of Christ, my comfort abounded much more. I never was more happy in my own soul, or more blessed in my labours.

The latter end of July, 1747, I had a call to visit Cornwood, and met with a kind reception. I preached several times among the people called Quakers. I hope good was done.

On my return I had an invitation to preach at Allendale-town. A great congregation attended, who behaved well, and heard the word

[1] It was at Sunderland, in the midst of an outrageous mob of sailors.—C.H.

gladly. The latter end of December I visited Allendale again. A glorious work broke out. The Lord stretched out His hand to save sinners. Mr. Topping, minister of that place, used all his art, power, and influence to stop it; but he could do nothing. His strength was perfect weakness against the Lord.

I went from town to town, and from house to house, singing, praying, and preaching the word; and great multitudes followed from place to place, weeping and seeking Him that was crucified. Great numbers were awakened, and found peace with God through the blood of the Lamb. I have frequently seen a whole congregation melted into tears, and bowed down before the Lord, as the heart of one man: especially once, when I was preaching in Mr. Lowe's old barn, at Dod-bank, the Lord manifested His great power. He wrought for the glory of His own name; and I stood still and looked on, with loving fear and wonder.

In the year 1748 I gave up my school at Sheep-hill, and everything that was comfortable and convenient, and removed to Hindley-hill, in Allendale. I lodged with honest James Broad-wood, and was as one of his family. The presence of the Lord dwelt in his house, and we lived in peace and unity. I formed a society at Hindley-hill, another at West-allen; one at Alesdon [Alston], and one at Ninthead. The Lord was among them of a truth. I had now work enough, and God's blessing on my labour. In the latter end of this year I visited Weardale. Some of the brethren attended me from Allendale.

It was in a storm of snow that we crossed the quagmires and enormous mountains. When we came into the Dales, we met with a very cold reception. The enemy had barricaded the place, and made his bulwarks strong. But the Lord made way for His truth. He opened the heart of a poor Scotch shepherd to receive us into his little thatched cabin, where we lodged all night.

The next day I preached under the walls of an old castle. A few children and two or three old women attended, who looked hard at us. When I had done we followed them into their houses, and talked freely to them in their own language about the kingdom of God. They heard, and obeyed the gospel. The next evening I had a large congregation, who heard with much attention, and received the word gladly. Some time after I preached in private houses, ale-houses, cock-pits, or wherever I could find a door open. The fire then spread from heart to heart, and God was glorified.

This was the beginning of a good work in Weardale, which has continued and increased to this day.

The spring following, in the year 1749, I began teaching a school near Hindley-hill.[1] But the work of God so increased in my hands that I could not properly attend it: therefore, in the latter end of the year, I gave it up, with all

[1] Wesley was at 'Hinely-hill' in September, 1749: 'Thursday 28 we set apart for fasting and prayer: John Brown and Mr. Hopper were with me. It was a day that ought not to be forgotten. We had all free access to the throne of grace; and a firm, undoubting confidence that He in whom we believed would do all things well.'—Wesley's *Journal*.

other secular employments, and cast myself on the bounty of my Lord and Master.

My little substance soon failed, and I saw nothing before me but beggary and great afflictions. Sometimes I was carried above all earthly objects, and had a comfortable view of the heavenly country. At other times I was much depressed, and could see nothing but poverty and distress.

I well remember, once on the top of a cold mountain in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me, and pushed me hard to return to my school, or some other business to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter. But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to my heart like lightning: 'When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing, Lord' (Luke xxii. 35). I answered with a loud voice, 'Nothing, Lord! nothing, Lord!' All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing!

> Constrained to cry by love divine,
> My God, Thou art for ever mine!

Since that time I have been richly supplied with all good things. This day I am full. I have all, and abound. Praise God and the Lamb for ever!

The work now began to spread in the Dales, Hexhamshire, North Tyne, and soon reached Whitehaven.

And now God raised up many preachers; men eminent both for gifts and graces. Some of them continued to be local, and some became itinerant, preachers. The latter end of the year 1749 [1] I left the Dales, and the dear children God had given me.[2] I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends, with melting hearts and many tears.

In those days we had no provision made for preachers' wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home.

I then set out for Bristol. I called at Chester, Durham, Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough, and found the Lord in every place. I spent a few days at Leeds. Here God opened my mouth to speak His word, and I hope good was done.

I preached at Birstall, on the top of the hill, before the foundation of the preaching-house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax, and found their little society at Skircoat-green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode to Rochdale, and preached in the evening at the widow Whittaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough; but we were not afraid, for God was with us. Next day I rode to Manchester, and preached that evening in a little garret by the river-side.[3] The congregation multiplied every

[1] From this period, I shall only give a short sketch of my travels, and now and then mention a small incident.—C.H.

[2] See Wesley's *Journal*, June 4, 1772.

[3] What has God wrought in Manchester since that day! The little one is become a thousand.—C.H.

meeting. On the Sabbath Day the old place would not contain them. The multitude was impatient to hear. The old wooden house shook under us, and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled, and some believed. The next evening they procured me a Baptist meeting-house. The place was crowded. They heard with attention. Many were awakened, and joined themselves to seek and worship God. They immediately bought a piece of ground, and laid the foundation of the first preaching-house. I rode through Cheshire, and joined a society at Alphraham, and another at Pool. It was an humbling time among the opulent farmers; the murrain raging amongst their cattle. They buried them in the open fields. Their graves were a solemn scene. The hand of the Lord was on the land. I visited the suburbs of Chester. God begun a good work then, which has increased and continued to this day. I preached at Birmingham, Evesham, Stroud, and Kingswood; and then rode to Bristol, where I spent a few days, and I hope not in vain.

March 20, 1750.— I set out with Mr. Wesley[1] for Ireland. We crossed the New Passage into Wales, and reached Cardiff before night.

21*st*.—We rode to Brecknock through heavy rain. Mr. Wesley's mare fell twice, and threw him over her head; but without any hurt to man or beast.

22*nd*.—We rode to Builth. A congregation waited for Howell Harris, but he did not come at the time appointed; so, at their request,

[1] cf. Wesley's *Journal*.

Mr. Wesley preached. I then spoke a few words. It was a time of love. The Welsh brethren rejoiced in the Lord. We then rode to Machynlleth, and then to Dolgelly, wet and weary enough.

24*th*.—We rode to Tan-y-bwlch. It rained incessantly all the way. Our horses were tired, and we were ready to faint; but God was our strength, and we rejoiced in our little toil.

25*th*.—We rode to Baldon-ferry. Mr. Jenkin Morgan came to the water-side, crossed over with us into the isle of Anglesey, and then conducted us to his house, half-way between the ferry and Holyhead.

Sunday, 26*th*.—Mr. Wesley preached at Howell Thomas's, in Trevorllwyd parish; in the afternoon, at William Pritchard's. The people understood no English; but their looks, sighs, and gestures showed God was speaking to their hearts.

We then went to lodge with one Mr. Holiday, an exciseman, who lived in a quiet, solitary place, where no human voice was heard but those of the family.

Wednesday, 29*th*.—We rode to Holyhead, and sent back our horses with John Jane, who had travelled from Bristol to the Head with three shillings, and had one penny left. About eleven o'clock we went on board. As soon as we sailed we had wind and rain enough without, and a violent storm in the ship. Mr. Griffith of Caernarvonshire, a clumsy, hard-faced man, saluted us with a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy; but God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded.

Thursday, 30*th*.—We wrought our way four leagues towards Ireland, but we were driven back in the afternoon to the mouth of the harbour. The wind then shifted two points, and we ventured out again. By midnight we were got half-way over; but the wind, turning full against us, and blowing hard, soon brought us back into the bay again. Mr. Wesley preached that evening on the history of Dives and Lazarus, to a room full of men decked with gold and silver; but they were soon satisfied with it, and went away murmuring. After they were gone we had a comfortable meeting with a few plain Welshmen.

Saturday, 31*st*.—We were determined to wait one week longer, if the wind did not serve before. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening. Captain Griffith, with his dear gentlemen, made noise enough; but our God delivered us.

April 1.—We returned to Mr. Holiday's, called at William Pritchard's, then went to Llanerechymedd; but the sons of Belial would not suffer us to enter the place.

Thursday, 5*th*.—Mr. Wesley preached near the town to a few precious souls, who heard and obeyed the word.

Friday, 6*th*.—The wind came fair; so we rode to Holyhead early in the morning, embarked with a fair wind, and, in the evening, landed at Dublin. I spent a few days in that city, and, I hope, not in vain. I then visited Portarlington, Edenderry, Mountmellick, Tyrrel's-pass, Athlone, Birr, and Aghrim, and found the Lord was with me in every place. I had great crosses, but

greater comforts. I then rode to Dublin, and spent a few days there with much satisfaction.

July 22.—I embarked with Mr. Wesley for England. We sailed about ten in the morning, and in the afternoon came to an anchor.

Monday, 23*rd*.—We had a vehement squall of wind, thunder, and lightning between the Welsh sands and the rocky shore of Lundy. We cried to the Lord in our trouble, and He delivered us out of our distress.

Tuesday, 24*th*.—The wind was contrary. It blew a storm. The seas ran mountain-high. We were tossed in a narrow channel, full of shoals, rocks, and sands. We prayed for help: our God heard, and brought us safe to Pill.

The next day I came to Bristol, where I spent a few days with pleasure, and then set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I visited the societies in my way, and they refreshed me in the love of Jesus.

I spent a few weeks at and about Newcastle. My dear friends were glad to see me. We rejoiced together. I then set out for Whitehaven, where I had a good season. The Lord crowned my weak labours with success. About the latter end of the year I left Whitehaven, rode to Cockermouth, then to Penrith, and the next day came to Hindley-hill. I took a fever in my journey; but rode on to Newlands, where I took my bed. My dear wife met me with joy and grief. She soon catched the disorder, and we continued sick for many weeks.

We lodged with Mr. George Hunter, a friendly

man. God richly provided all things for us. He blessed us in our sickness, and restored us to health. Praised be His name for ever!

In the spring, 1751, I set out for Bristol. I met with honest John Nelson at Leeds. We rode on together with some other preachers. We spoke freely to all that Providence put in our way; and God blessed our labours. We rode through heavy rains, and rapid floods; but the Lord preserved both man and beast, and brought us to our journey's end in peace.

Monday, March 11.—Our Conference began at Bristol. The more we conversed, the more our love increased to God and one another. We kept to our first doctrines, and were of one heart and one mind.

I then returned to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, visiting the brethren in my way. I preached every evening at seven, and every morning at five o'clock, and often at noon-day, the common work of a Methodist preacher.

Monday, April 22.—I set out with Mr. Wesley for Scotland. We rode to Alnwick. Our friends received us with joy. We praised God together.

Tuesday, 23*rd*.—We rode to Berwick. Mr. Wesley preached at a young man's funeral, who had been cut off suddenly. It was a solemn time. Many heard for eternity.

Wednesday, 24*th*.—We rode to Old-Camus [Cambus], through a Scotch mist. We rode past Preston-field, saw the place of battle, and Colonel Gardiner's house. Here that good man, and brave soldier, fought and died for his king and country. We then rode on to Musselborough,

where Mr. Wesley preached in a large school to a company of wise men, so called.

Friday, 26*th*.—We rode back to Berwick. I left Mr. Wesley, and the week following returned to Musselborough, where I spent a few days. I preached night and morning to a large congregation, who heard with great attention. This was the beginning of a good work in Scotland. Some years after I preached at Edinburgh, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee, and Aberdeen. God blessed His word, and raised up witnesses to testify that He had sent us to the North Britons also.

In 1752 I set out, with my wife, for Whitehaven, where I spent a few days with pleasure and profit to myself and others. We then embarked for Ireland; and, after a tedious voyage, landed at Dublin. I spent a few weeks in that city, and then rode to Cork, where I spent the winter with joy and sorrow. We had warm work in that city for a long time; but the word of the Lord prevailed, and silenced the enemy.

In the spring I returned to Dublin, and met my wife and friends, who had just escaped the fire of a very hot persecution. This year I had many blessings and crosses, both by sea and land.

I'll praise my God with every breath:
O let me die to see Thy day!
Now snatch me from this life of death:
O come, my Saviour, come away!

In the year 1753 I left Dublin, and embarked for England. We landed at Whitehaven. I first visited the Dales, then rode to Newcastle; and the Lord was with us of a truth.

In the year 1754 I embarked at North Shields for London. May 22, our Conference began. It was a time of love.

In June I embarked for Newcastle. I had a quick and pleasant passage. I preached to the ship's company, who heard the word with joy. I landed at Shields, and then came to the Orphan-House, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where we praised God and the Lamb, with one heart and voice, for mercies we had received.

May 9, 1755.—Our Conference began at Leeds. The first question was, Whether we ought to separate from the Church of England. After many deep and serious conversations, we concluded that it was not *expedient* for many reasons.

I then set out again for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As I was passing through Chapeltown, I got a dreadful fall from my horse. My foot was much hurt, but all my bones were preserved. Glory be to God and the Lamb! I rode with much pain to Newcastle, but enjoyed great peace and a calm resignation to the divine will. This I believe was a gracious dispensation, and was sent to humble me, and prepare me for a greater trial.

August 15.—My dear wife took a fever. She had great pain, and heavy affliction for about ten days, together with many violent temptations. But she enjoyed perfect peace, and was fully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. At last she triumphed over death, and without a doubt, a sigh, or a groan, breathed out her happy soul into the arms of her adorable Redeemer!

On the 28th Mr. Massiot[1] preached her funeral sermon to a very large congregation of true mourners. The same evening she was interred, amongst her ancestors, in Ryton church. She was an agreeable, affectionate wife, a constant friend, and a pious, humble Christian. She is now in Paradise, and I am left to mourn.[2]

O may our heart and mind
Continually ascend,
That haven of repose to find
Where all our labours end;

Where all our grief is o'er,
Our sufferings and our pain:
Who meet on that eternal shore
Shall never part again.

In July, 1756, I set out for Bristol. Our Conference began on August 26. It was a good season.

September 15.—I once more embarked for Ireland, with Mr. Murlin, Olivers, Gilbert, and Massiot. On the 19th we were within sight of land, and, being well satisfied with a tedious and dangerous passage, we left the ship, and got into a fishing-boat; and, after rowing very hard for some hours, landed at Robertson's Cove, about twenty miles from Cork. We were poor strangers now in a strange land, among a people of a strange language! There was not

[1] Wesley reached Cork, July 7, 1758: 'James Massiot died in peace the morning before; so I was just in time to perform the last office for him.'—*Journal.* See Murlin, vol. ii. p. 161. Joseph Cownley married 'the pious and amiable Miss Massiot.'—*Early Methodist Preachers*, ii. 14.

[2] See p. 167.

one inn or private house in the little village that could give us a night's lodging. It was a gloomy time. The day was gone, and we stood looking one at another, like a company of poor prisoners. In these circumstances God sent us an honest farmer, who was a Papist; and he took us home to his house in the country, and showed us great kindness. We lodged that night in the midst of our enemies; but the Lord suffered no man to hurt us. The next morning our kind host provided us horses, and sent a servant to conduct us safe to Cork.

Here we met with a kind reception. Our friends rejoiced with us, and praised God for all our deliverances. I lodged with old Mr. Massiot, who kept a house too well provided for pilgrims. I spent a few days in that city, preached night and morning, and visited the brethren from house to house. I hope good was done.

I then set out for Dublin, where I spent my winter with pleasure and profit.

The spring following I returned to Cork, where I spent about two months. I found much satisfaction, but not without temptations. I met with reproaches and many cruel mockings; but found that Spirit resting upon me which gave me victory over reproach and shame.

I then rode to Limerick, where I spent a few weeks. I met with some severe trials in that city; but God delivered me. I then set off for Dublin. I found my body and mind very weak, yet not without many kind visits from my Lord.

In autumn I took a sore fever. Doctor Rutty,[1]

[1] See *Proceedings Wesley Historical Society*, v. 72.

that venerable and wise physician, attended me faithfully, without fee or reward. He thought my labours under the sun were ended. I bade farewell to the world. I was kept in perfect peace, patient and resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. I had comfortable and clear views of Paradise and a world of happy spirits. When to all appearance I was just on the brink of eternity, I fell into a sweet rest, and dreamed I was dead, and saw all things prepared for my funeral, and that my spirit was with Christ, in a state of unspeakable happiness; but was sent back again to call a few more sinners to repentance.

I then awoke, my fever was gone, and from that moment I began to recover. My strength of body soon returned, and the Lord sent me forth with a fresh commission.

I laboured in Ireland till July, 1758, and then embarked for England, with Mr. Johnson, Greenwood, and Gilbert. We had a fine gale, and soon landed at Parkgate. I then rode to Bristol. Our Conference began August 10. It was a good season. God crowned our meeting with love and unanimity.

The latter end of September I arrived once more at the Orphan-House, without Pilgrim-street-gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. My good old friends were glad to see me, and received me as one raised from the dead.

In the latter end of this year I had some thoughts of changing my life again. I prayed for divine direction, and took the advice of some of my dear friends. One who loved me, and wished me well, recommended to me an agreeable

person of a fair character; and on April 17, 1759, we were married at St. Andrew's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. God made His face to shine upon us, and blessed us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all spiritual and temporal blessings. This was a day of prosperity; therefore I thought it a day of great danger.

I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle; but not to leave my Master's work. I began a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world; but my Lord would not suffer me. He showed me that His good work would bring me far more gain in the end than all the shops in Newcastle. So I set out for the north, and preached at Placey, Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick, Dundee, Musselborough, Leith, New and Old Aberdeen, and Peterhead; and then returned to Newcastle the same way.

I then set out for the London Conference, visited Canterbury and Dover, returned to London, and then rode back to Newcastle. In all those journeys I found the Lord was with me, and gave His word success.

In the year 1760 I again visited Scotland. The work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Sinners were converted, mourners comforted, and saints built up in their most holy faith. We had now a fair prospect of a great harvest in North Britain, till men of corrupt minds stirred up the spirit of vain controversy: we

then spent our time and strength about the meaning of words, instead of promoting the fear and love of God. My soul was troubled, and my spirit grieved within me, to see so many precious souls turned out of the way of holiness and happiness by noisy disputes and foolish jangling. These men will blush in the last day who have done this great evil. Let me live with men of peace, who love God and the brethren, and enjoy the life of religion in their own souls.

April 28, 1761.—Mr. Wesley came to Edinburgh,[1] and the Lord gave His word success. Sinners heard with attention, and the saints rejoiced in God their Saviour.

I visited Dundee and Aberdeen, returned to Edinburgh, and from thence to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where God blessed His own word. I then set out with Mr. Wesley and several of the brethren for Durham. Mr. Wesley preached in a green field, by the river-side, to a very large auditory. One poor man was favoured with a stone, and lost a little blood; but in the general they behaved tolerably well. I preached in the evening, in the same field, to a large congregation. A gentleman, so called, employed a base man to strip himself naked, and swim through the river to disturb the hearers; but a good woman soon hissed him off the stage; so he was glad to return by the way he came, with much disgrace. Mr. John Greenwood informed me afterwards that the very gentleman who encouraged the poor wretch above mentioned

[1] Wesley's letters to Hopper are of singular interest. *Works*, xii. 305–18.

was some time after found drowned in the same river! O God, Thy judgements are unsearchable, and Thy ways past finding out!

In August I left Newcastle, and set out with my wife for London. It was a disagreeable journey, but God blessed and preserved us from all evil. September 1 our Conference began. Thence we set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I spent my winter.

The latter end of July, 1762, we left Newcastle, and set out for Leeds. August 9, our Conference began. I was stationed in that circuit.

In July, 1763, I set out for London. Our Conference began and ended in love. I then set out for Scotland. I spent my winter in Edinburgh, Dunbar, and Berwick. We lived in a little dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old black walls, disagreeable enough:[1] but we had a good season; many poor sinners were converted to God. We saw the fruit of our labours, and rejoiced. My dear Edinburgh friends were very kind, especially Lady Gardiner,[2] that good old saint who is now with Jesus in Paradise. Praise God for all His mercies!

In the year 1764 I continued labouring in Scotland. On June 1 I set out with Mr. Wesley and my wife for Aberdeen. We had a pleasant

[1] Wesley writes, September 29, 1764: 'My judgement is this, That it is best for you to be at Edinburgh (but in a more airy lodging, if it can be had for love or money) before the end of next month.'—*Works*, xii. 307.

[2] Daughter of the Earl of Buchan and widow of Colonel Gardiner, who fell at Preston Pans, and whose biography, by Dr. Doddridge, Wesley read on October 20, 1747 (see *Journal*). Wesley refers to Mrs. Gardiner in his *Journal*, April 24, 1751.

and profitable journey. This summer we laid the foundation of our octagon at Aberdeen. The Lord gave me success. Many precious souls were awakened, and added to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are enrolled in heaven.

November 13.—We set out for Edinburgh, and rode to Dundee. The 15th we rode to Kinghorn, and the next morning crossed the Firth, and took the stage to Edinburgh. Our friends received us with joy, and we praised God together.

In the year 1765 we laid the foundation of our octagon at Edinburgh. I met with much opposition and many discouragements. But the Lord was on my side and helped me. I collected all I could, gave all I could spare, and borrowed above three hundred pounds to carry on and complete that building.

I preached on the foundation one Sabbath Day to a large congregation. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and many rejoiced to see that day. I preached every Lord's day on the Calton Hill, a large Golgotha, a place of the skull! By preaching so often in the cold air to very large auditories, with other difficulties and hard labours, I laid the foundation of a very dangerous disorder in my bowels, which baffled all the skill of physicians, and the virtue of medicine, for more than three years. But I could say:

> Let sickness blast, and death devour,
> If heaven will recompense our pains:
> Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
> Since firm the word of God remains.

In July I set out for England. I spent a few days at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and then rode to Manchester. Our Conference began on August 20, and ended the 23rd: God refreshed us. I visited the brethren, and then set out for the north.

In October Mr. Alexander Coates died at the Orphan-House, in perfect peace. I saw him fall asleep in the arms of our adorable Saviour without a doubt. Farewell, my brother, for a season! But we shall meet again to part no more.

In the year 1766 I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, but was very much indisposed. I was just worn out; my bodily strength failed. I was on the verge of eternity.[1] But, blessed be God, I enjoyed great tranquillity of mind, and very good spirits.

> Accepting my pain,
> I no longer complain,
> But wait till at last I the haven obtain.
>
> Till the storms are all o'er,
> And, afflicted no more,
> On a plank of the ship I escape to the shore.[2]

February 20.—That old saint, Henry Jackson, died full of love, being ninety-nine years and five months old. Let me die his death!

August 12.—Our Conference began at Leeds.

[1] Wesley refers, in November, 1766 (*Works*, xii. 308), to proposals made that Hopper should become a settled minister in Sunderland. In June, 1767, he writes: 'I wish you joy of having full employment. You know, the more work, the more blessing.'

[2] *Poetical Works of J. and C. Wesley*, iv. 363.

We enjoyed a solemn sense of the presence of God. We met and parted in love. I then rode to Newcastle, and spent a few months in that circuit. My disorder continued; but I could say, 'When I am weak, then I am strong.'

In July, 1767, I set out for London. God was with me, and gave me a will and power to preach His word. August 18 our Conference began. Dear Mr. Whitefield and honest Howell Harris attended. All was love, all was harmony. It was a Pentecost indeed!

In the beginning of September, 1768, I left Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstall in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey's end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome; our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together.

On Tuesday, August 1, 1769, our Conference began at Leeds. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and made us of one mind and judgement.

In the latter end of July, 1770, I rode to London. Our Conference began on August 7. The Lord presided over us, and made it a time of love. I then set out for Birstall, where I had laboured two years with great satisfaction,[1] and I hope with some success.

August 26.—I took my leave of my dear Birstall friends, and rode with my wife to Bradford,

[1] Wesley tells him, November 20, 1769: 'If you love the souls or bodies of men, recommend everywhere the *Primitive Physic* and the small tracts. It is true, most of the Methodists are poor; but what then? Nine in ten of them would be no poorer if they were to lay out a whole penny in buying a book every other week in the year. By this means, the work of God is both widened and deepened in every place.'—*Works*, xii. 309.

in Yorkshire. We met with a loving reception. I laboured this year with much comfort. I hope good was done.

In the year 1771 the Calvinists proclaimed open war against the Remonstrants. In August several of them met at our Conference in Bristol: but their strength failed; they could do nothing, for truth is great, and will prevail.

The two following years I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, among my dear friends and countrymen, whom I love for the truth's sake. Great things hath the Lord done in that part of His vineyard.[1]

In the year 1774 I was appointed at the Bristol Conference for Liverpool Circuit. I took my leave of my dear Newcastle friends with much reluctancy, and set out with my wife for Lancashire. September 26 we reached Bolton-in-the-Moors, where we met with a friendly reception. We lodged with honest George Eskrick. The presence of the Lord dwelt with us, and we enjoyed great peace.

In the year 1775 I removed to Liverpool, where I spent a few months with pleasure and profit. I found much love both to the place and people: they bore with my bodily weakness, and refreshed me in the Lord.

In July, 1776, I left Bolton, and set out for London. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. The shout of a King was in the midst of us, and we praised God together for

[1] Hopper was with Wesley on June 20, 1774, when the horse attached to Wesley's chaise took fright and nearly rushed over a steep precipice. See *Journal*.

all that He had done. I spent a few days in that great city; preached the word, visited a few dear Christian friends, and then set out for Manchester.

November 7.—I set out once more for Ireland. The 8th I reached Conway; the 9th, Holyhead; the 10th I embarked, and, after a dangerous passage, landed that evening in Dublin. I preached every evening at Wood Street to a large auditory. God blessed His word, and gave me success. I visited a few poor backsliders, who were glad to see the face of an old friend. May God restore them for Christ's sake! Monday, the 24th, I embarked for England; 25th, landed at the Head, and took the stage to Conway; 26th, I came to Chester, and the 28th to Manchester, where my wife and friends received me with great joy. We praised God for trials and blessings.

In the latter end of July, 1777, I set out for Bristol. I visited the principal societies in my way, and God gave me strength of body and peace of mind. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. We had a good season: love to God and man crowned our meeting. I then rode to Manchester, and spent a few days with my old friends. I published the word of salvation in Salford, on the Sabbath Day, to a large congregation. Some of our mistaken Churchmen presented the fire-engine; but their strength failed, they could do nothing. This vain attempt seemed to be the last effort of a conquered enemy. I then set out for Bradford in Yorkshire, where I spent an agreeable year

with Mr. Benson[1] and my dear friends. I hope our weak labours were made a blessing to many.

In the year 1778 our Conference began at Leeds, the first Tuesday in August. I was stationed another year, with Mr. Murlin and Johnson, in Bradford Circuit. We laboured together in love; God was with us, and gave us success.

In the year 1779 I was appointed, at our London Conference, for Colne Circuit, in Lancashire.

August 25.—I took my leave of our dear friends at Bradford, and set out with my wife for Colne. I met with many agreeable and some disagreeable things. The grand enemy had wounded many, who, I hope, are now healed again. We had a severe winter, many crosses and trials, and many blessings. The Lord owned our weak labours, and gave us a little success. The last time I visited the classes in this circuit we added thirty-eight to our number, and twenty-three to the church of the living God, who had found remission of sins through the blood of our adorable Saviour. Nine died in peace, and are now with the spirits of just men made perfect in the Paradise of God.

I can say but little about the controversy

[1] One wonders if the future editor of the *Arminian Magazine* read Wesley's letter to Hopper, dated October 18, 1777. 'I hang out no equivocal colours. Scriptural, Christian, &c., are all equivocal words. I mean a magazine purposely wrote to defend Universal Redemption. Other magazines give forty pages for sixpence, this gives eighty for a shilling. My time is short: so I publish as much as I can at once, if haply I may live to finish it. All these things I have maturely weighed.'

between the Calvinian brethren and the Arminians. I believe Christ tasted death for every man: but I do not love contention; I am no disputant; I therefore leave polemical divinity to men of learning, abilities, and experience. I can only say, I have been greatly humbled for my sin. I know in whom I have believed. I know God is love. I know it by experience. He hath loved me, and given His Son for me. I have peace with God, through faith in the blood of Christ. I am at peace with all the saints, with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I desire to follow after peace with all men. I hate sin, and by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ, and I pursue it. By all means I follow on, if I may apprehend that for which I was also apprehended of Christ Jesus. I aim at, wish, and pray for all that grace, glory, and immortality promised by the Father, and procured by the Son of His love. This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity; and this religion I call mine.

This I desire to recommend to all men, by preaching His word in the pulpit, in the house, and in the way; in season and out of season, according to my ability.

Without this religion, all names, notions, and forms, among all sects and parties, are but mere parade and idle show. Without repentance, without faith in the blood of Christ, without holiness of heart and life, without love to God and man, all is nothing. Let all men consider this well, and pray for, and seek after, this one

thing needful, that they may be saved from sin in this life, and from hell in the great day of the Lord Jesus ! [1]

January 5, 1780.—I preached at Colne on old Christmas Day, my birthday. What is time ? 'Dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade.' Lord, help me to embrace the present moment !

23*rd*.—I met with a perfect hurricane at Bacup. I was shut up with mountains of snow with a poor old woman till the 27th, with little fire and small provisions ; but God was with us. The same day I set out with James Dawson and John Earnshaw, over the hills, to Colne, well in body, and in perfect peace of mind.

April 2.—I rode from Preston to Bolton, to meet Mr. Wesley. We had a good season ; the Lord was with us of a truth, and great was our joy.

July 16.—I set out for Bristol, visited the societies in my way, preached the word, and was refreshed. Praise the Lord !

Our Conference began on Tuesday, August 1, and concluded on the 9th. Our brethren made me president in Mr. Wesley's absence. A poor helpless worm ! Superintendent ! President ! Great words ! I doubt we have not grace to bear them. I visited the brethren in my return. I hope good was done : great was my joy.

This year I had my comforts with the cross. I trust some good was done ; I left the circuit in peace. God was glorified.

August 2, 1781.—I left Colne, and set out for

[1] The autobiography given in the *Magazine* for 1781 closes here ; the rest was added in 1802.

Leeds, where I was stationed this year with Mr. Mather and Mr. Benson. I am not without fear. God give us success!

October 3.—I set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and met my dear friends with joy. This journey I trust was a blessing to many, and to my own soul.

January 1, 1782.—We renewed our covenant, and God confirmed it; His power was present to heal. I preached on Isa. lv. 3. The Lord Jehovah was with us, therefore we did rejoice.

Our Conference was at London this year. I did not attend. I had a kind invitation to the metropolis, but I preferred a country circuit.

August 20.—I left Leeds, and set out for Birstall. I preached before the old house, from Rev. xxi. 6, where I had preached thirty-five years ago, before there was any preaching-house in the place.

Dec. 23.—At Hanging-Heaton I preached sister Wilson's funeral sermon. I preached her husband's fourteen years before, and his daughter's thirteen months after: they all died in the Lord, and left a good testimony behind them.

July 10, 1783.—We had thunder and lightning, one tremendous clap after another, from ten o'clock till one in the morning, as if the heavens and earth had been in one flame. Who shall stand in the last great day, when worlds on worlds shall pass away and be no more?

August 26.—My wife and Nancy set out in the midst of thunder and lightning for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Lord saved them, and brought them to their journey's end in peace and safety.

Praise the Lord! 27th, I followed them, and reached Newcastle the 29th. This year I had many blessings among my old friends and countrymen, in the land of my nativity.

January 1, 1784.—In the evening we renewed our covenant, and began the new year with great joy and humility. I set out for Rothbury and Alnwick, but was shut up at Saugh-house with a violent storm of snow. All the roads were filled, no post could travel: therefore my wife could have no tidings. But the Lord provided a harbour for me: I had a good house, a loving friend, and everything needful for man and horse. God is good.

24*th.*—I set out with a friend for Morpeth.

25*th.*—Came safe and well to Newcastle. My dear wife and friends received me as one alive from the dead. 'Praise the Lord, O my soul!'

July 26.—Our Conference began with some contention. We had war for many days on account of the Deed of Declaration.[1] Alas! for this. Dear Mr. Fletcher, by prayer and his great humility, gained his point at last.

August 2.—The war ended, and we had peace. Praise God and the Lamb for ever!

13*th.*—I came to Bolton, met with a kind reception, and preached that evening. For some time I met with a cross; but, through faith in the blood of the Lamb, I overcame it.

January 1, 1785.—We renewed our covenant. This year the work of the Lord prospered, many souls were added to the church, and Satan's

[1] The Deed which gave a legal constitution to the Conference. See Wesley's *Journal*, July 27, 1784.

kingdom fell. Great was our rejoicing in the Lord.

July 12.—I set out for London, visited Stockport, Buxton, Derby, &c.

20*th*.—By the hand of a kind Providence came to London in good spirits. Bless God! we had great unity and peace.

August 3.—Our Conference concluded. Mr. Pawson, Mr. Hanby, and J. Taylor were ordained, and sent to Scotland. This was a new thing. I was the first Methodist preacher that visited North Britain. The gospel was then well received, and good was done.

5*th*.—I left London, visited the brethren, preached the word, and, on the 10th, came to Bolton in peace.

January 1, 1786.—We renewed our covenant, and God renewed our strength. Many were filled with love, peace, and power.

July 12.—I left Bolton, and set out for Bristol.

21*st*.—I preached, from Matt. x. 7, before the Conference. My great Master was with me. I found liberty to preach the kingdom. The Conference began on the 25th, and concluded August 9th. I was appointed for Liverpool.

August 2.—I left Bristol, and on the 9th reached Bolton. I preached the word at several places by the way, and the power of the Lord was present to heal.

14*th*.—I set out for Liverpool. I had a good time in this circuit. My friends were very kind; and the Lord blessed the word, and gave me success.

30*th*.—Mr. Lee, who succeeded me at Bolton, died in peace, and entered into his rest.

October 3.—I preached his funeral sermon to a large congregation. It was a solemn time indeed. I knew the man well, and his conversation. I laboured with him in several circuits in England and Scotland. He was a good preacher, and a pious man. Our Conference began the last Tuesday in July, 1787. We had great peace and unity, and our love abounded to God and all mankind.

August 8.—I returned to Bolton again. Some few began to think I came too often round, and were not well pleased; but the Lord owned His poor servant more and more, stopped every mouth, and made many hearts rejoice.

January 5, 1788.—Old Christmas Day. I entered into the sixty-sixth year of my age. A moment! a moment!

January 1, 1790.—I preached from 2 Cor. ix. 15. He is all in heaven and on earth.

Our Conference was this year at Bristol, but I did not attend. I have now preached and travelled over England, Scotland, and Ireland, about forty-seven years; yet I merit nothing. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. It now appears to me I shall keep a regular circuit no longer, but go where my good Lord and Master directs. Lord, give peace and success! I spent the remaining part of this year in Liverpool, Colne, Burnley, Padiham, Blackburn, and Preston. I hope I may say, with humility, good was done; and I found a blessing as a present reward.

The Rev. Mr. John Wesley died March 2, 1791, aged eighty-eight. This great man is now gone

to receive his reward, and his works will follow him. Though he be dead, he yet speaketh. He was a singular character.

March 30.—I preached his funeral sermon on John xix. 30: 'It is finished.' When I began to sing, a remarkable incident happened: a plain, simple man heard something crack, and immediately cried out, 'The gallery is coming down!' This dreadful cry struck the whole congregation with a panic; all was in confusion. The people came down stairs one over another. Some came over the gallery, others through the windows; but the commotion was soon over, all was still as night, and I began and finished my sermon with quietness. It was a good season; there were many melting hearts.

This year I visited our friends in Yorkshire; and I have reason to believe the Lord was with me, and good was done. Our Conference began at Manchester, July 27, and ended August 8. Above two hundred preachers attended. Our new mode of government was settled with great unanimity. For such a body of men to agree in one, we must say, 'is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.'

January 1, 1792.—February, March, and April, I laboured at and near Bolton; the rest of the year I made little excursions to the neighbouring circuits. I met with some trials, but many comforts. I found tranquillity. The good word was blessed, the churches edified, and God our Saviour glorified.

January 1, 1793.—In the spring I left Bolton, and visited Yorkshire and other places. The

hand of the Lord was with me, and His power was made manifest. Sinners were apprised of their danger, and saints built up in their most holy faith.

January 1, 1794.—I can now do but little. I grow feeble ; but the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my portion. Thou art my all : my theme, my inspiration, and my crown ! Keep me and save me to the end ! Amen.

January 1, 1795.—I am spared, and able to do a little. I have still one mite to cast into His treasury. He has made me a wonder to myself. I have now been about fifty-two years in my good Lord's service : He has kept me by His mighty power, and I trust in His infinite mercy He will keep me to the end. I have seen wonders night and day, by land and sea. Jesus is my foundation, way, and end. I have now entered into the seventy-third year of my age. O, what a dwarf ! I know little ; I have done little ; I have suffered little. Lord, forgive my sins, my virtues too, through blood divine !

January 1, 1796.—Through infinite mercy, I am still spared to do a little for my dear Lord and Master. I visited Yorkshire this year, and made many other excursions. I saw the unerring hand of a kind Providence in all my ways.

January 1, 1797.—Through mercy, I am still preaching. My soul thirsts for the prosperity of Sion. O, may our God hasten the accomplishment of His great and precious promises, and the glory of the latter days !

July 27.—I attended our Conference at Leeds ; and, at the desire of my brethren, preached. I

hope the word did not fall to the ground. This year has been a year of many mercies.

January 1, 1798.—My God is good; my God is love; my God is all, and all things to me—to me, a worm, nothing, vile, and base. I am lost in wonder, love, and praise!

January 1, 1799.—We began this year with the sound of the jubilee trumpet. We had a good season; the word did run, and was glorified.

July 28.—I attended the Conference at Manchester; preached, and rejoiced to see my brethren: it was a time of love. I then set out for Liverpool; preached in all the chapels to large congregations; and I have reason to believe God did own His own word.

January 1, 1800.—We began this year with prayer and praise. February, March, April, and May, preached at and about Bolton. In August I visited Liverpool; preached in all their chapels to large auditories. My Lord and Master gave me a blessing, a present reward; and I returned to Bolton in peace.

January 1, 1801.—We ended the old year with prayer, and began the new year with praises.

29*th*.—I preached on Ps. cxix. 77: 'Let Thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live.' I am dead: let Thy mercy come unto me; show me favour, and I shall live—live to Thy glory here, and live with Thee in glory for ever. Amen.

The following particulars respecting the close of Mr. Hopper's life were collected by Mr. Atmore

from Mrs. Hopper, from his niece, and his faithful friend, Mr. George Eskrick :

About sixteen years ago, Mr. Hopper having built a house adjoining the chapel at Bolton-le-Moors, from that time his wife and family resided there ; while he continued his itinerant labours in the neighbouring circuits till the Conference of 1790 ; when, finding the infirmities of old age increasing, and being no longer capable of doing the work of an evangelist, he desisted, and from that period his labours were principally confined to Bolton ; though he generally paid an annual visit to his friends in Yorkshire and the adjacent circuits.

Thus he continued to spend the remainder of his strength in that blessed work in which he had given indubitable proof that his whole heart had been for many years engaged. He preached frequently in Bolton, and his discourses generally afforded instruction and profit ; and they were often accompanied with a divine influence to the hearers.

He preached his last sermon about a week before his confinement, from John xvi. 33 : 'In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.' It was attended with a peculiar blessing to many ; and he delivered it with an uncommon degree of energy.[1]

In the beginning of December, 1801, while

[1] The Rev. T. E. Brigden has a sermon of Hopper's on Hag. ii. 9. 'It is a marvel of homiletical arrangement and powerful appeal.'

cutting a loaf of bread, his arm suddenly fell, and it was supposed that he had dislocated his shoulder. His pain was very great; and from that time he was confined to the house. He had also another complaint of a very painful nature, supposed to have been the effects of his incessant labours and sufferings in the early part of his life. This, in conjunction with the violent pain in his arm and shoulder, caused him to consume away like a garment fretted by the moth; and he was, for some weeks before his death, reduced almost to a skeleton. In the beginning of February he was confined to his room, and soon after to his bed. He bore his afflictions with invincible patience and Christian fortitude. Sometimes he exclaimed, 'Lord Jesus, pity a poor sufferer'; but would instantly say, 'It is all right, it is all right; it will soon be over; His will be done.' The enemy was never permitted in the least to disturb him. His old, faithful friend, George Eskrick, sat up with him every other night, and sometimes two nights together, and was a witness of his holy resignation to the will of his heavenly Father.

'On Thursday, February 25,' says Mr. Atmore, 'I went to Bolton, to see Mr. Hopper. When I entered the room, he was in a doze; but as soon as he awoke, he gave me his hand, and, with great affection, said, "O, my dear friend, how glad I am to see you! Providence has sent you. You and I have often met; and this will be our last meeting on earth. But we shall meet in our Father's house above." He then desired his niece to bring his own drawer.

He took from thence several papers; and, after looking at them for some time, he said, "I commit these papers to you: here is an account of my poor, insignificant life and labours, and a sermon I preached on the only foundation God has laid in Zion for poor sinners to build their hopes of salvation upon. On this foundation all my hopes are founded now; and it does support me! I have not a doubt—no, not the shadow of a doubt; and as for the enemy, I know not what is become of him. I have neither seen him nor heard of him for some time. I think he has quitted the field." He then put the papers into my hand, and said, "If you think they will be of any use to the church and the world, take them, make them your own; revise, make what alterations you please, and send them forth in the name of the Lord." '

The last day or two he lay quite composed; he spoke very little, but was frequently engaged in earnest, fervent prayer, often saying, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' On Friday evening, March 5, 1802, he entered into his Master's joy, in the eightieth year of his age.

He had given particular directions concerning his funeral; and, agreeably to his request, his remains were deposited in a new vault, on a spot of ground he himself had pointed out when in perfect health, in the new churchyard in Bolton. His funeral was attended by a great multitude of his friends and the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity; and his body was committed to the earth 'in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life,

through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' having been a steady follower of Christ for upwards of fifty-nine years, and a faithful preacher of the gospel for about fifty-seven.

He was a plain man, of good understanding, of some learning, and of a sound judgement,—a scribe well instructed in the things of the kingdom; a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. His talents for the ministry were very considerable; but he was altogether an original, and his matter and method were peculiar to himself. He was a Boanerges, a 'son of thunder,' to the careless sinner, whom he frequently made to tremble while he forcibly preached the 'terrors of the Lord,' and 'warned him to flee from the wrath to come.' And he knew well how to speak a word in season 'to them that were weary'; he was a 'son of consolation' to the 'mourners in Sion,' to whom he proclaimed the Saviour of the world, as the only foundation of their hope and confidence, for pardon, holiness, and heaven. To humble, faithful believers, he preached the Lord that bought them, as made of God unto them 'wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption'; at the same time he 'affirmed constantly, that they who had believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.' Thus did this man of God, for upwards of half a century, 'warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.' Few public men have preserved a more unblemished character, conducted themselves with

greater propriety, or been more justly or generally beloved and respected.

His labours for a series of years were very extensive and successful. He formed some of the first societies in the north of England, visited Ireland several times, was the first Methodist preacher who went into North Britain; and travelled through a great number of the circuits in this kingdom, with honour to himself and profit to the people. He now rests from his labours, and his works will follow him.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Thomas Cooper, from 2 Sam. iii. 38: and appeared in the *Methodist Magazine*, 1803, pp. 389, 456.

'He was a person of an exceedingly quick apprehension, and of so clear an understanding as not easily to be imposed upon. Though the warmth and fertility of his imagination were obviously great, he never suffered himself to be hurried by it into any ridiculous extravagancies; but so governed it by a sound judgement as to make it subservient to the grand design of his ministry. To these he added a strong memory; which, as it faithfully retained what was committed to its charge, so it greatly contributed to his stock of useful knowledge, and of course to those abilities which made him so acceptable to his numerous hearers. Of those abilities, however, he appeared to have no flattering opinion himself, as he seldom spoke in reference to them but in terms of great humility; yet they, together with his genuine piety, were so

well known to, and appreciated by, his discerning friends as to procure him that deference in all places which is rarely paid but to real worth.

'That the people might sustain no loss through any avoidable deficiency in him, he laboured diligently to make himself master of those rules which would best enable him to convey instruction to their minds in the most easy and convincing manner. In most of his public discourses the well-informed hearer would at once perceive the man of genius and of science, as well by their disposition and arrangement as by the judicious selection of metaphorical illustrations with which they were adorned; so that he was justly esteemed a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

'He was not entirely unacquainted with what are called the learned languages. As he considered the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of the utmost importance, both to himself and to mankind at large, and believing it impossible for them to be translated into foreign languages without depriving them of their native beauties, he regarded it a duty which he owed to himself, to God, and the Church to acquire some knowledge of those languages in which the Scriptures were originally written.

'At that time of his life, when the vivacity of youth and the vigour of a good constitution served, in some measure, to supply the want of better knowledge, he foresaw that he might survive a period when those resources would totally fail; and this stimulated him to such a

course of application as enabled him fully to keep pace with the increasing light of his hearers, and to maintain his eminence in the ministry, with little abatement, to the close of his protracted pilgrimage.

'He was equally great in respect to the success which attended the employment of his abilities in the cause of truth. His first success was among his own relatives, many of whom very soon became witnesses of the truth he taught; and the success with which he began increased in proportion as he extended his labours. Being a good man, full of faith, and mighty in the Scriptures, God greatly blessed his word both to saints and sinners, graciously banished all his fears, and made him as bold as a lion in the face of all his dangers.

'It often happened while he was delivering his message to tumultuous assemblies, with an energy which strongly marked the interest which he himself had in it, that giddy triflers, impious despisers, ring-leaders of mobs, and the most abandoned reprobates have wondered, trembled, given signs, as convincing as they were sudden, of the deepest compunction and sorrow of heart; the bitter wailings of the penitent prisoners have been turned into songs of deliverance, and the whole assembly has been awfully affected with a sense of the majesty and presence of God. And that divine unction which rendered his word efficacious during the earlier years of his ministry continued to attend him, both in his public and more private exercises, to the end of his life.'

The following letter was written to the late Rev. George Whitefield. It contains a particular account of the dying experience of his first wife :[1]

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *August* 28, 1755.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

So true is the maxim of St. Augustine, 'It is impossible to lose anything without sorrow but what we possess without passion.' We believe there are few persons free from an infinite number of these engagements, though, indeed, we may be ignorant of them till an actual separation discovers what they are ; and when the precious soul is separated from them, it has then a sense of the privation proportionable to its union with them. All transitory things are but shadows, and the most beautiful flowers soon fade away. We commonly say, 'Afflictions are blessings in disguise' ; and may we not presume to say, with the same propriety, that 'human comforts are afflictions in disguise,' more especially if they engross any part of the heart which belongs to our heavenly Father ? Therefore we ought to enjoy all things in God, and for His glory, who is the centre of all perfection, the fountain of all true happiness, and the one chief good.

Must I now exhibit a Christian tragedy ? I will, then, tell you, my dear friend, I have been very happy for ten years, three months, and six days, with an agreeable companion, a constant friend, and a most dear, loving, affectionate

[1] See p. 129.

wife. But now, alas! alas! I look back, and, behold, it is a dream.

Friday, August 15, 1755, my dear and most loving wife took a violent nervous fever, at the Hagg, in Derwent-water, the place of her nativity; and on the 25th died in perfect peace, in the glorious arms of her dear Redeemer. On the 27th her funeral sermon was preached at the same place, to a large auditory, who came from every quarter; and that evening she was interred in Ryton church, amongst the dry bones of her dear ancestors, where her body shall sweetly rest till the morning of the general resurrection.

But perhaps it may be more agreeable to you still if I give you a more particular account of God's gracious dealings with her in her sickness, more especially in the solemn article of death. In the beginning of her illness, Satan endeavoured by his infernal insinuations to make her give up her shield, and cast away her confidence, by suggesting, 'You are built upon the sand, you have laid a wrong foundation; all you have to trust in, after twelve years' progress in the Christian religion, are only false imaginations, a feigned castle in the air, or a mere chimera in your head; therefore you must lie down in sorrow, and be miserably disappointed in the end.'

When this violent storm came upon her so near the haven, she immediately fled to the throne of grace, the rock of Israel; for it was now high time to cast anchor on that sure bottom, to examine her faith and the ground of her eternal hopes. She therefore entreated the almighty God of Jacob to discover her real state

that she might see and know whether her condition was so melancholy in reality, or whether it was only a flood of temptations or the voice of the enemy. She had no sooner supplicated the Friend of sinners but the cloud broke and the glorious sun of righteousness began to shine, the old subtle tempter fled, and God filled her with joy and peace in believing.

After she had spoken a few words to me concerning some temporal affairs, she gave up this world, her dear friends and relations, and the dearest part of herself, cheerfully. She patiently endured all her afflictions, and drank the bitter cup without complaining; nay, not so much as desiring the least abatement of her pain, or mitigation of her trouble. Her only request was for patience and resignation to bear and suffer all her heavenly Father's will. She expressed her firm trust and confidence in the Lord several times, without fear or doubt, as her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, as long as she could speak; and after that useful organ was silent, she manifested her inward joy, and the peace she felt, by her patience and heavenly looks. During this time I prayed with her twice; and was enabled in confidence to commit her body to the earth from whence it came, and her precious soul to the dear Redeemer who bought it with His most precious blood. Near the time of her happy departure, I took her in my arms, and said, 'Farewell! farewell! farewell! my dear wife, and most loving companion! The Lord receive thy spirit!' When death, that long-

desired and long-expected friend, was executing his last office, and drawing the last pin of the poor earthly tabernacle, she looked up, and gave me a parting smile, and then calmly and sweetly fell asleep in the arms of Christ, without a struggle, sigh, or groan.

Now, my dear friend, what shall I say ? I soon shall close my weary eyes in peace, and stretch composed upon my dusty bed. O death ! thy quiet and refreshing shade shall yield a long, an unmolested rest from all our fruitless toil and vanity below the sun. May we love the dear Redeemer ! and may we live in Him, and die in Him ! is the sincere prayer of your affectionate brother and afflicted friend,

C. H.

Mr. Whitefield replied :

MANCHESTER, *August* 29, 1755.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

This day, at noon, I heard and felt your mournful, joyful account of the triumphant departure of your dear, dear yoke-fellow. Surely, thought I, affliction makes one eloquent. Surely, thought I, I love and sympathize with the dear afflicted writer from the very bottom of my heart. This hath constrained me to pray for you ; and, being just come from my God, the same love constrains me to write you these few lines. Courage, my dear man ! courage ! Wish her not down. Yonder she is, encircled in the arms of our Jesus ! We shall go to her, but she will not return to us. O for patience to

wait! I am sick of this world, I am sick of time, I am sick of all poor transitory things. I long, I long to be in a happy eternity. O that we may be found doing our Master's will, and humbly waiting at His bleeding feet! Indeed I feel, I feel I love you, and could now freely weep over you. O to sit loose to all created objects. Alas! alas! how soon may our Isaacs be called for, and our beloved friends cut off with a stroke! What should we do, had we not an unchangeable Jesus to go to? Into His dear and everlasting arms I most humbly commit you. My heart is full: I could write much, but am called away. Adieu; the Lord be with you and yours and all! We have had golden seasons abroad, and sweet invitations at home. Help me to cry, 'Grace! grace!' and accept of this as a token of unfeigned sympathizing love, from yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

G. W.

Mr. Wesley sent him two letters.

St. Ives, *September* 12, 1755.

My dear Brother,

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and wise are all His ways. The great point is to understand the design of His gracious wisdom, and to answer and fulfil that design. One thing is certain: He calls you to a more full and absolute dedication of your soul and body to Him. He calls you to converse with Him more in prayer and meditation. In the former

we more directly speak to God; in the latter, He speaks to us. And every possible loss is gain, if it produces this blessed effect.

Consider yourself as now more than ever married to Christ and His dear people: then, even for this kindly-severe dispensation, you should praise Him for ever.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

BRISTOL, *October* 8, 1755.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

There is something of an openness and frankness in your temper which I love; but that very same temper will sometimes expose you to inconveniences, unless you always have an eye to God, that He may give you steadiness and resolution. O, keep your heart with all diligence, and do not take one step without first consulting your best friends. You have one business on earth—to save souls. Give yourself wholly to this. Fulfil the work of a preacher, and of an assistant, as you never did before. Be another Thomas Walsh. Pursue the whole of scriptural Christianity. Stand upon the edge of this world, ready to take wing; having your feet on earth, your eyes and heart in heaven.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

His Obituary in the *Minutes of Conference* for 1802 describes him as 'one of the first Methodist preachers, and the oldest upon the list at the time of his decease. At a time when the land

was covered with gross darkness, and there was little or no genuine vital religion to be found, and when those eminent servants and messengers of God, the Rev. Messrs. Wesleys and Whitefield, were opposed and persecuted with great rage and violence, he stood forth as a determined witness for God and His truth against the combined powers of earth and hell. The insults and violence of avowed enemies, and the persuasion and entreaties of mistaken friends, he equally disregarded; and persisted to testify, and frequently at the hazard of his life, "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," wherever a door was opened, and he could have access. In private houses, barns, stables, on mountains or plains, in streets and market-places, in cities, towns, and villages, wherever any could be found that were willing to hear, he was ready to testify the gospel of the grace of God; and this he did with peculiar ability and success. He was a Boanerges, a son of thunder: his word was with power, and stout-hearted sinners trembled from time to time under the awful and alarming message his Lord gave him to deliver. He feared the face of no man; he declared the whole counsel of God with clearness and energy wherever he came, and the Lord crowned the labours of His servant with great success. Scores, yea, hundreds, were convinced of the error of their ways, and converted to God, by his instrumentality in different parts of the British empire, especially during the early days of his ministry. He laboured nowhere without more or less fruit;

and the seals of his mission were many, and may be found at this day in most parts of the kingdom in which he laboured. As to his character as a man and a Christian, he was a person of peculiar integrity, and of most unblemished morals. He was prudent, steady, zealous, and active, especially during his younger days.'

THOMAS MITCHELL[1]

I WAS born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, December 3, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle who was in the same parish. When I was turned four years old, my mother went one day to market, and left me to take care of the house, and two younger children. She had not been gone long before I set the bed on fire. A neighbour, seeing the smoke, and thinking the house was on fire, came with all speed to our assistance. In a short time she, with some others, extinguished the fire. Had it not been for this providential assistance, we might all have been burned to death; for we had not sense to get out of the way. From five years old I had strong convictions at times, and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled, till I had said my prayers, which I thought would make all up.

At fourteen I was bound apprentice to a mason. While I lived with my master, I had little concern for my soul. But a few years after, at the time of the Rebellion, I enlisted

[1] From *The Arminian Magazine*, June, 1780.

among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which one time in particular took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear death exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually: 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.' I thought I must fulfil it; but I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

In the year 1746, the Rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the Methodists. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy. Some time after I went to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith; yea, that the very worst of sinners might be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon after I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, 'I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' He showed clearly that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon, and much more so in singing these words:

Whither should a sinner go?
His wounds for me stand open wide:
Only Jesus will I know,
And Jesus crucified.

But when he told us we might know our sins forgiven in this life, yea, this very moment, it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it at all. But I continued in prayer; and in a few days I was convinced of it, to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear; and at the same time He filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and could trust Him, and praise Him with joyful lips. I could sing with all my heart:

> O what shall I do, my Saviour to praise?
> So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace;
> So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
> The weakest believer that hangs upon Him!

Soon after this Mr. John Wesley came to Bradford,[1] and preached on 'This one thing I do.' He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back, and left me alone; yet afterward some of them returned. Before this I thought my hill was so strong that I could never be moved. But, seeing so many fall into sin, I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief, and was fully convinced that there must be a farther change in my heart before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Keighley, and had many opportunities of hearing and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But, feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in

[1] *Journal*, April 27, 1747: 'I preached at Birstall, at Wibsey Moor, and at Bradford, and regulated the societies.'

despair. I could scarce pray at all, and was tempted to murder myself. One day, as I was going to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and going over a bridge, I was strongly tempted to leap into the river; but the Lord had mercy upon me, and delivered me from this temptation. Yet still I had many fears. I was in this state near half a year, finding no comfort in anything. But one evening one of our friends prayed in the society, and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterwards saw that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

Not long after this I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for Him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived abounding with all manner of wickedness, and no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that; for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly, whether I was called to speak in public or no. After many reasonings in my mind, I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me; my bones shaked, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me: some of them heard with pain, as my gifts were very small, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was

convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would; and God began to bless my weak endeavours. Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine. Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer, that God would show me the way wherein I should go. Being now employed at Sir Walter Coverley's, in the parish of Guiseley, I met with a few serious people at Yeadon. They were just setting out in the ways of God, and desired me to give a word of exhortation among them. I did so a few times, and God was pleased to bless it to their souls. The little society increased, and they all dearly loved one another. But Satan was not idle. Every time we met, a riotous mob gathered round the house, and disturbed us much.

One evening, while William Darney[1] was preaching, the curate of Guiseley came at the head of a large mob, who threw eggs in his face, pulled him down, dragged him out of the house on the ground, and stamped upon him. The curate himself then thought it was enough,

[1] Darney formed societies in Lancashire and Yorkshire, which Wesley examined at his request (*Journal*, May 4, 1747). He afterwards became one of Wesley's preachers. See Wesley's *Works*, xii. 321, 322, xiii. 219, 220; Laycock's *Haworth Round*, p. 58, &c.

and bade them let him alone and go their way. Some time after Jonathan Maskew came. As soon as he began to speak, the same mob came, pulled him down, and dragged him out of the house. They then tore off his clothes and dragged him along upon his naked back over the gravel and pavement. When they thought they had sufficiently bruised him, they let him go, and went away. With much difficulty he crept to a friend's house, where they dressed his wounds, and got him some clothes. It was my turn to go next. No sooner was I at the town, than the mob came, like so many roaring lions. My friends advised me not to preach that night, and undertook to carry me out of the town. But the mob followed me in a great rage, and stoned me for near two miles, so that it was several weeks before I got well of the bruises I then received.

About this time a carpenter was swearing horribly, whom I calmly reproved. He immediately flew in a violent passion, and having an axe in his hand, lifted it up, and swore he would cleave my head in a moment. But just as he was going to strike, a man that stood by snatched hold of his arm, and held him till his passion cooled. At first I felt a little fear, but it soon vanished away.

While I was working at Sir Walter's some one informed him that I was a Methodist. He was much displeased, saying, 'I like him for a workman; but I hate his religion.' This was chiefly owing to his steward, whom I had often reproved for swearing. He mortally hated me

on that account. But in a little time he was taken ill. Perceiving himself worse, he sent a message to me, earnestly desiring I would come and pray with him. I went, and found him in an agony of conviction, crying aloud for mercy. I showed him where mercy was to be found, and then went to prayer with him. While I was praying, his heart seemed broken, and he was bathed in tears. He owned he had been a grievous sinner; but he cried to God with his latest breath, and I believe not in vain.

I stayed some time after in these parts, and was fully employed. All the day I wrought diligently at my business; in the evenings I called sinners to repentance. And now the mobs were not so furious, so that we had no considerable interruption. In the meantime I waited to see whether the Lord had anything for me to do. I made it matter of continual prayer, that He would make my way plain before me. And in a little while I had much more of the best work upon my hands. I was desired to give an exhortation at a village called Hartwith. I went thither several times. Several here were deeply convinced of sin; and two or three soon found redemption in the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins. Afterwards I was invited to Thirsk. Here I found a few hungry souls. But they were as sheep without a shepherd, seldom hearing anything like the gospel. I spent two nights among them. The serious people were much refreshed; some were awakened and saw their danger, and cried out for mercy.

After this I went to Stockton, where I found a lively people, who had been in society for some time. I preached several times among them with great liberty of soul and freedom of speech, and, to all appearance, the word had much effect on the hearers. Here I met Mr. Larwood, who behaved very kindly to me, and told me he hoped I should be very useful if I kept humble. He then sent me before him to York and Leeds, where I preached and gave notice of his coming. From Leeds I went to Birstall. It happened to be their preaching-night. John Nelson was sick in bed; so the people desired me to preach or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could; and the people seemed well satisfied. The next day I went to High-town, and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul; and I have reason to believe that the people were well satisfied.

From Birstall I went to Heptonstall. Here I met with a lively people, who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. Among others, a very tall man, who was a butcher, was cut to the heart. But it had a very bad effect upon him for the present. For he went home and beat his wife in a most terrible manner, because he thought she had told me of all his sinful ways. But afterwards he was convinced and converted. I continued some time in these parts, and went to several places in Lancashire.

Here also I found many were awakened, and several found peace with God, while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

I continued here some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But, by the blessing of God, I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes; but I catched no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and advice of good Mr. Grimshaw.

One time Paul Greenwood[1] and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, 'If you are sent of God to preach the gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed, you must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth; and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth. And he will let nothing go, for God and His cause, but what is forced from him.'

In the year 1751 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. I found a serious people and an open

[1] On his death, in 1767, Wesley calls him 'honest John Greenwood.' 'He could ill be spared: but he was ready for the Bridegroom; so it was fit he should go to Him.'—*Works*, xii. 309.

door; but there were many adversaries. This was far the most trying year which I had ever known. But in every temptation God made a way to escape, that I might be able to bear it.

On Sunday, August 7, I came to Wrangle, very early in the morning. I preached, as usual, at five. About six, two constables came at the head of a large mob. They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public-house, where they kept me till four in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, 'I will go to the minister, and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go.' When he came back, he said, 'They were not to let him go yet.' So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the neck. Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot, and then they carried me into a public-house again. Here I was kept till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again, and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep. Here four men took me by my legs and arms, and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink; but it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to

the Lord, and was content His will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned. So they watched till I came above water, and then, catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out.

I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself I saw only two men standing by me. One of them helped me up, and desired me to go with him. He brought me to a little house, where they quickly put me to bed. But I had not lain long before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, carried me into the street, and swore they would take away one of my limbs if I would not promise to come there no more. I told them, 'I can promise no such thing.' But the man that had hold of me promised for me, and took me back into the house, and put me to bed again.

Some of the mob then went to the minister again, to know what they must do with me. He told them, 'You must take him out of the parish.' So they came and took me out of bed a second time. But I had no clothes to put on, my own being wet, and also covered with paint. But they put an old coat about me, took me about a mile, and set me upon a little hill. They then shouted three times, 'God save the king, and the devil take the preacher!'

Here they left me penniless and friendless, for no one durst come near me. And my strength

was nearly gone, so that I had much ado to walk, or even to stand. But from the beginning to the end my mind was in perfect peace. I found no anger or resentment, but could heartily pray for my persecutors. But I knew not what to do, or where to go. Indeed, one of our friends lived three or four miles off. But I was so weak and ill that it did not seem possible to me to get so far. However, I trusted in God and set out, and at length I got to the house. The family did everything for me that was in their power: they got me clothes and whatever else was needful. I rested four days with them, in which time my strength was tolerably restored. Then I went into the circuit, where I met with more persecution. As I was preaching in a certain village in the Fen, the mob came into the house and broke through the congregation in order to pull me down; but the good woman of the house took me into the parlour, and stood in the door with a great kitchen-poker in her hand, and told the mob the first man that came near the door she would knock him down. As she was very big with child, and near the time of her travail, this, with the sight of the great poker, kept them off, so that they could not get at me. However, they stayed some time, and then left the house without doing much harm. After they were gone I gave an exhortation, went to prayer, and then we went to bed in peace. In the midst of this persecution many were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so our consolations by Christ abounded also. As to the lions at Wrangle, an appeal to the court of

King's Bench made both them and the minister quiet as lambs.[1]

Coming in December into Lancashire, I found trials of quite another kind. The poor people were in the utmost confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep. John Bennet,[2] who before loved and reverenced Mr. Wesley for his work's sake, since he got into his new opinions[3] hated him cordially, and laboured to set all the people against him. He told them, in the open congregation, that Mr. Wesley was a pope, and that he preached nothing but popery. December 30 I met him at Bolton. I desired him to preach, but he would not. So I got up, and spoke as well as I could, though with a heavy heart. After I had done he met the society, and said many bitter things of Mr. Wesley. He then spread out his hands, and cried, 'Popery! popery! I will not be in connexion with him any more.' I could not help telling him, 'The spirit in which you now speak is not of God; neither are you fit for the pulpit while you are of such a spirit.' While I was speaking a woman that stood by me struck me in the face with all her might. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar; so I thought it best to retire. Afterward I believed it was my duty to expostulate with him, but it did not avail: it seemed to me

[1] See Wesley's *Journal*, April 3, 1752. When Wesley visited Boston, June 16, 1780, his congregation 'behaved in the most decent manner. How different from those wild beasts with whom Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Mather had to do!'

[2] Married Grace Murray, October, 1749. See Tyerman's *Wesley*, ii. 42.

[3] Calvinism.

that all love was departed from him. His mind was wholly set against Mr. Wesley and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline; and he had infused his own spirit into the people in many places, so that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept my soul in peace and love. Glory be unto His holy name![1]

In May, 1752, I came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, after all the storms I had gone through, I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction. And it pleased the Lord to prosper my labours in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Gateshead Fell, and many other places, where many sinners were both convinced and converted to God. One time, while I was at Berwick, a poor woman came to the house where I was, with a heavy child on her back. She had come from Ireland, and was going into Scotland. The woman of the house asked her to come in, and gave her some tea. She seemed to be very poor, and wanted help. But as I had only ninepence, and had thirty miles to ride the next day, I thought I could not spare her anything; but after she had got the child again on her back, and was setting off, my heart pitied her, so I gave her sixpence out of my little stock, and had threepence left. But I trusted in God's providence, and knew that He would provide for me. After preaching the next morning a poor soldier put two shillings into my hand. So God rewarded me fourfold. I could not help praising Him for this instance of His goodness to me.

[1] Mitchell reported this to Wesley. See *Journal*, March 31, 1752.

On May 8, 1753, I came with Mr. Wesley from Newcastle to York. On the 12th he preached to a large congregation, and the next morning from 'Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears, some for joy, and some from a sense of their sins. He had designed to go on to Lincolnshire. But, through the importunity of the people, he consented to stay a little at York, and desired me to go in his place.

From the following Conference (at which fourteen preachers were present, beside Mr. Wesley and his brother), I went into Wiltshire, where Mr. Pearce, of Bradford, was as a father to me. While I was in this circuit I went to see a young man (Mr. Thomas Olivers) who had given an exhortation at times among the people. I found him working hard for his bread. He seemed to me to have much sense, and to be very sincere. I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and told him that I, and many more, thought he might be very useful. Mr. Wesley desired he might go with me into Cornwall. So we went together; and I believe the Lord made us a blessing to that people: many were convinced and converted, and my friend grew very much in knowledge, and, I hope, in the fear of the Lord. He has been a very useful man in the church of God, and one who has gone through many trials. The Lord help both him and me to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of eternal life! Here I formed a firm resolution of cleaving more

closely to God than ever I had done before. I longed to be wholly freed from the enemies which I carried in my own bosom. I saw no other could possibly hurt me, if I could but conquer them. I read the Bible and prayed much, and found many blessings from the Lord. And I found, in particular, an entire disengagement from all earthly things. My soul was even as a weaned child. I was willing to be anything or nothing. I had no desire for anything in this world but to live unto the glory of God. O how easy does it make everything, when we can give up all for Christ!

After I had spent some time in Devonshire and Cornwall, I was sent for up to London. Here I had a fever for some time. When I was pretty well recovered Mr. Wesley desired me to go down to Norwich. I was not well upon the road, but was abundantly worse when I came thither. But, following the advice of a skilful man, I was in a while restored to health and strength. Here I found much comfort among a poor but a loving people. I was in this circuit (putting the first and second time together) about four years. But in the latter part of this time I had many trials from J. Wheatley's [1] people. Mr. Wesley had been prevailed upon to take the Tabernacle, and to receive Wheatley's people under his care. Wheatley used to call them 'my dear lambs'; but such lion-like lambs did I never see. Disci-

[1] One of Wesley's preachers, expelled in 1751. See Wesley's *Journal*, July 8, 1751, and *Works*, ix. 489. This temporary building on Timber Hill was erected for him in 1752. See Tyerman's *Wesley*, ii. 120–6.

pline they knew nothing of; every one would do what was right in his own eyes. And our doctrine was an abomination to them. Great part of them were grounded in Antinomianism. The very sound of 'perfection' they abhorred; they could hardly bear the word 'holiness.' Nothing was pleasing to them, but 'faith, faith'; without a word either of its inward or outward fruits.

Between the first and second time of my being at Norwich I spent some time in Sussex. The first place that I preached at was Rye, where no Methodist had ever preached before. Yet there was no opposition, but they received the word with joy and readiness of mind. And many soon felt the burden of their sins, several of whom quickly found peace with God. Most of these very willingly joined together in a little society; some of whom are lodged in Abraham's bosom, and others still remain walking in the way to Sion.

Hence I went to several country places. But they were not all so peaceable as at Rye. At the desire of a serious man, I went to Hawkhurst; he had requested me to preach at his house. About six in the evening I began. But I had not spoken many words before a numerous mob broke in, pulled me down from the place where I stood, and forced me out of the house. Then they struck up my heels, and dragged me upon my back about half a mile to a public-house called Highgate,[1] where I found many gentlemen, with

[1] Highgate is the part of Hawkhurst on the main road to Sandhurst.

the minister of the parish. They asked, 'By what authority do you preach?' I answered, 'By the authority of King George,' and showed them my licence. They spoke a little together, and said, 'You may go about your business.' But, observing the house was filled with a drunken mob, I said, 'Gentlemen, I will not go unless I have a constable to guard me.' They immediately sent for a constable, who guarded me to the house from whence I came. But as it was winter time, and the road very dirty, I was in a poor condition, being a good deal bruised, and all my clothes plastered over with dirt. However, after I had got some dry clothes, and taken a little refreshment, I prayed with the family, and then God gave me quiet and refreshing sleep. When I came to London I applied to a lawyer, who sent down writs for five of the ringleaders. But they quickly came to an agreement. They readily paid all the charges. And here ended our persecution in Sussex. I found a thankful heart for a good king, good laws, and liberty of conscience. And about this time I had much of the presence of the Lord: He was good to me, both as to my body and soul. I prayed much, and the Lord heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. From Sussex I went to Norwich a second time, and here found a young woman that I thought would make me a good wife. In October, 1760, we were married. I bless the Lord for her: she is one of the most suitable wives for me that I could have found in all the world.

In August, 1778, I was stationed in Staffordshire, where I spent two years with much satis-

faction. The latter year I had many trials, both outward and inward. The work of the Lord did not seem to go forward among the people in some places; but at others it prospered much, while love and peace prevailed among us, which gave me encouragement. I found some refreshings in my own soul at times, and I could trust the Lord in every trial. His promises were a means of keeping me from being weary and faint in my mind. And by His blessing I got through all, and saw that every trial works for good. The words of the apostle were of great use to me: 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.' Lord, help me to see Thy good hand in all my trials, that they may be a means of making me more holy in all manner of conversation!

In July, 1780, I set out for Bristol, and in my way met with several of our brethren, some of whom I had not seen for many years. It rejoiced my heart to find them still in the way of the Lord, after all their trials; and that they were still desirous to preach the gospel of Christ. Our journey was attended with much peace and love, and we rejoiced that the Lord had helped us thus far. At this Conference I was ordered to go to Canterbury; and on August 20 I got safe there, my wife and children having arrived one day before me. I was very thankful to the Lord for His goodness in bringing them safe to this place. I had not been here long before I found that true religion had lost ground. When I left them, two-

and-twenty years ago, they were a loving, lively people. But they fell out by the way, and lost their love one for another. I was much troubled to see them so cold and careless in the cause of God. This, with my own infirmities, brought me into much trouble of mind. But I gave myself up to prayer, and begged of the Lord that He would deliver me from whatever hindered His work in my own soul, and that He would do it in His own way. About the middle of October last He laid His afflicting hand upon me. I had a fever attended with an ague. This continued half a year. I was under the care of an apothecary in Canterbury. He did all he could to remove my disorder, but without effect. From Canterbury I removed to Dover, thinking the change of air would help me; but I still continued as bad as ever. While I was here Mr. Boardman, one of our preachers, came to see me; and by Mr. Wesley's and his desire I came to London. After I arrived my disorder grew worse and worse almost every day. On April 6 I was so ill that all about me thought I was dying. Dr. Lettsom [1] attended me very constantly, without fee or reward. He was of great service to me, for through the means he made use of, the fever was soon removed.

When I was first taken ill the Lord removed all uneasiness from my mind. I received great comfort in my soul, and could rejoice in the God of my salvation. Indeed, a sense of His goodness

[1] John Coakley Lettsom, a Quaker physician and philanthropist, born in West Indies in 1744, began to practise in London, 1770. See *Dictionary of National Biography*.

continued with me in all my afflictions, which was a cause of such cheerfulness as I had scarce known for twenty years before. I could frequently sing :

> How good Thou art, how large Thy grace !
> How easy to forgive !
> The helpless Thou delight'st to raise,
> And by Thy love I live.[1]

I now look back on the labour of three-and-thirty years, and I do not repent of it. I am not grown weary either of my Master or the work I am engaged in. Though I am weak in body, and in the decline of life, my heart is still engaged in the cause of God. I am never more happy than when I feel the love of Christ in my heart, and am declaring His praise to others. There is nothing like the love of Christ in the heart to make us holy and happy. It is love alone that expels all sin out of the heart. Wherever love is wanting, there is hell ; and where love fills the heart, there is heaven. This has been a medicine to me ever since I set out. When I was low it was this that raised me up. When sin and Satan beset me on every side it was this that drove them away.

> O Love, how cheering is thy ray !
> All pain before thy presence flies :
> Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away
> Where'er thy healing beams arise.
> O Jesus, nothing may I see,
> Nothing desire, or seek, but Thee !

According to the *Minutes of Conference*, Mr.

[1] *Poetical Works of J. and C. Wesley* i. 123.

Mitchell was appointed to the Keighley Circuit in the year 1783 with Benjamin Rhodes. This appears to have been his last station as an effective preacher. The next year his name occurs in the list of those who had retired from the labours of the regular itinerancy, and were supported by the Preachers' Fund as supernumeraries. In 1785 the answer to the usual question, 'Who have died this year?' is, 'Thomas Mitchell, an old soldier of Jesus Christ.'

Mr. Mitchell is said to have been a man of slender abilities as a preacher, and to have enjoyed only a very defective education. But he was a person of deep piety, and of exemplary simplicity and zeal. A holy unction attended his earnest ministrations, and he was very successful in the conversion of ungodly men to Christ. It is said that the late Mr. Hey, of Leeds, during his connexion with the Methodists of that town, once took his friend Dr. Priestley to the chapel to hear Mr. John Hampson, when, to his disappointment and mortification, Mr. Mitchell occupied the pulpit. After the service Mr. Hey apologized to his learned and philosophic friend for the absence of the popular speaker whom they had expected to hear, and for the simple and unpretending ministrations of the man by whom they had been addressed. He was soon given to understand that no apology was necessary. The doctor discerned the true character of Mr. Mitchell, and pronounced upon him the significant eulogium: 'Mr. Hampson may be useful, for he is an able man and a good preacher; but this man must do good, for he aims at nothing else.'

THOMAS OLIVERS[1]

I WAS born at a village called Tregonan, in Montgomeryshire, in 1725. My father died in December, 1729. My mother was so afflicted on account of his death that she died of a broken heart in March following ; leaving me and another son, not two years old, behind her. My mother's father, Mr. Richard Humphries, took care of my brother, and when he died left him to the care of his eldest son.

My father's uncle, a man of property, took care of me while he lived, and when he died left me a small fortune, ordering in his will that the interest of it should be employed in bringing me up, and that I should receive the principal when I came of age.

The person to whose care he left me was Mrs. Elizabeth Tudor, eldest daughter to his son-in-law, Mr. Thomas Tudor, an eminent farmer in the parish of Fordon, in the same county. And as she was unmarried, she committed me to her father's care, in whose house I was boarded till I was eighteen years of age.

As soon as I was capable I was sent to school,

[1] Enlarged from *The Arminian Magazine*, February, March, 1779.

where I received such learning as was thought necessary. And as to religion, I was taught to say my prayers morning and evening, to repeat my Catechism, to sing psalms, and to go to church, in general, twice every Sabbath day.

But my carnal mind soon discovered itself, by prompting me not only to a great variety of childish follies, but also to a multitude of heinous sins; particularly lying, and taking the name of God in vain. In these I was confirmed by the examples of all about me; for, with grief I mention it, I knew not so much as a single person (except an old man or two, whom we all supposed to be crazy) who made any scruple of these or of various other acts of wickedness. There was one man in the parish who exceeded all the rest in cursing, swearing, and horrid blasphemies. This hellish art he studied with all his might. His custom was to compound twenty or thirty different expressions, to make one long and horrid oath! I never heard of any telling him he did wrong; but many laughed at him, and admired his cleverness; and some even strove to imitate him. Among the rest I was one; and so apt a scholar was I in these diabolical practices that before I was fifteen years of age I vied with my infernal instructor. It is horrid to think how often I have cursed the wind and the weather, the souls of cows and horses, yea, the very heart's blood of stones, trees, gates, and doors! So that on this, and on various other accounts, I was generally reckoned the worst boy who had been in those parts for the last twenty or thirty years.

At eighteen years of age I was bound appren-

tice ; but by this time I was become so idle that I did not half learn my business. Dancing and keeping company engrossed my whole soul ; and was it not for some small restraints, they would have employed my whole time. Accordingly, the very first day I was at full liberty, I gave scope to my inclination to such a degree that out of sixteen nights and days, I was fifteen of them without ever being in bed.

For four or five years I was greatly entangled with a farmer's daughter, whose sister was married to Sir I. P., of N—wt—n, in that county. What

> Strange reverse of human fates !

For one sister was wooed by, and married to, a baronet, who was esteemed one of the finest men in the country. When she died Sir I. was almost distracted. Presently after her funeral he published an elegy on her of a thousand verses ! For her sake he said :

> O that the fleecy care had been my lot,
> Some lonely cottage on some verdant spot !

For some time he daily visited her in her vault, and at last took her up and kept her in his bedchamber for several years.

On the other hand, her sister, who was but little inferior in person, fell into the hands of a most insignificant young man, who was a means of driving her almost to an untimely end. I cannot omit giving some intimation of this particular, seeing all who are acquainted with my former life know this to be one great aggregate of my folly and wickedness ; and seeing it is that

which lay heaviest on my mind, both before and after my conversion, and which to this day I remember with peculiar shame and sorrow. However, God, who often brings good out of evil, made it a means (though a remote one) of my conversion.

For such was the clamour of the people, and the uneasiness of my own mind, that I determined to leave the country. Accordingly I set off for Shrewsbury. Here I continued for some time; and among various things which I have much reason to be ashamed of, I went one night to the Methodist meeting, and out of mere wantonness made use of some very indecent language as I came out. I also went one Sabbath day to St. Chad's Church, in company with a very wicked young man. We got into the organ-loft, and while the late Dr. Adams was preaching I was wantonly cursing him and almost every sentence which proceeded out of his mouth. This was matter of huge diversion to my companion, who expressed his hearty approbation of my profane and impious behaviour by ridiculous laughter, and the like. O how much is it to be lamented that all this while we were called Christians, Protestants, and Churchmen!

From Shrewsbury I went into a country village, about three miles from the town. Here I was greatly reduced in my circumstances: my conscience also stared me dreadfully in the face, as it had frequently done on many former occasions. I thought, 'I live a most wretched life! If I do not repent and forsake my sins, I shall certainly be damned: I wish I could repent of and forsake

them : if I could but hate them as well as I love them, I should then be able to lay them aside ; but till then I despair of doing it. For I have always gone to church ; I have frequently prayed and resolved against my evil practices ; and yet I cannot leave them.' I then thought, 'I will receive the sacrament, and try what that will do.' Accordingly I borrowed a *Week's Preparation*, and went through it regularly, reading on my knees the meditations and prayers for each day. On Sunday I went to the Lord's table, and spent the following week in going over the second part of the book in the same manner I had done the first. For this fortnight I kept tolerably clear of sin ; but when it was over I returned the book with many thanks, and then returned to my former practices.

From hence I went to Wrexham. I had not been here long before I was taken ill of a violent fever, of which most people expected me to die. As it was known that I had little or no money, a Methodist (Mr. John Memis, afterwards Dr. Memis, of Aberdeen, who was then a journeyman to an apothecary in the town) visited me without fee or reward ; and I believe, under God, saved my life.

When I was got out of danger I found great thankfulness to God for sparing me ; and as soon as I was able I went to church twice every day, and read books of devotion at home ; and frequently wept bitterly over what I read or heard, for I saw very clearly that if I had died at that time I should certainly have gone to hell. I therefore again resolved to forsake my sins, and to become a new man.

But before I was fully recovered my resolutions vanished away, and I returned to my former practices. Accordingly, being one day at the house of one Mr. Jones, who was then a Methodist, I swore by my Maker. Mr. Jones said, 'Young man, what a pity is it that you, who are so lately brought back from the borders of the grave, should already curse and swear!' I bowed, and thanked him for his seasonable reproof, and esteemed him ever after. Several times I followed him to and from church, listening with great attention to what passed about religion between him and others. At last I got him by himself, and asked him many questions concerning the way to heaven. When we came near his house I asked, 'How do you intend to spend the remainder of this Sabbath?' He answered, 'In reading, meditation, prayer, and singing of hymns and psalms.' When he was gone a little way from me I turned about to look at him, and thought, 'This is an odd man indeed! However, I wish I was like him; but, at present, I cannot spend my Sabbaths without mirth and pleasure.' I therefore gave up my acquaintance with him, and soon became as wicked as ever.

Not long after a young man and I, after committing a most notorious and shameful act of arch-villainy, of which I was the contriver, agreed to leave the country together. Accordingly we set off about one in the morning; he leaving his apprenticeship, and I several debts, behind us, which was generally my case wherever I went. About one o'clock the next day we got to Shrewsbury. While we were in a public-house my

companion began to curse and swear at a Welsh Methodist, who sat quietly in the chimney-corner. On this I cursed my companion, and said, 'What is that to you, suppose he be a Methodist? The poor man is quiet, and does not affront us; therefore you are a scoundrel for affronting him'; and so enraged was I at the ill-usage this poor man received from my companion that I was very near striking him on that account.

The next day we got to Bridgenorth, and put up at a public-house, the landlady of which was a Methodist, which we soon discovered by her conversation. We winked at each other, put on very grave looks, and asked if there were any more Methodists in that town. She answered, 'I thank God there are a few.' We continued our affected gravity all that evening and the next morning while we were in her house. But when we were got a little way out of town we laughed and held our sides, and cursed and swore till we were quite weary, because she thanked God that there were such wretches in the town.

After some days we got to Bristol.[1] A few hours after our arrival a sharper, pretending to pick up a sixpence, enticed us into a public-house, where, in about half an hour, he stripped us of all our money, to the last penny. However, we got into lodging that night, and the next day we got business. I had not been long in that city before I went to lodge with one who had been a Methodist, but was now, at times, a slave to drunkenness. His wife too had once been a religious woman; but was now eaten up with the cares of the world.

[1] In December, 1748.

There was also a lukewarm Moravian in the house. With these I had various disputes, particularly about election, which I could never believe. One day the Moravian and I quarrelled so highly that he struck me ; and as he was a tall, lusty man, I knew I should have no chance in fighting him. However for a whole hour I cursed and swore in such a manner as I never heard before or since ; and perhaps in such a manner as is seldom equalled on earth, or exceeded even in hell itself. And what was the greatest aggravation, it was all in confirmation of a lie ! For though I swore with all the rage of a fiend and with almost all the diversified language of hell that I would prosecute the man ; and though I wished, perhaps not less than an hundred times over, that vengeance, ruin, destruction, and damnation might lie on body and soul for ever if I did not do it immediately, yet I never so much as attempted to do it, from that hour to this. Indeed, such a habit of horrid swearing had I acquired that though I saw I was dreadfully wrong, and at times wished and laboured to break it off, yet on the smallest occasion I was carried away, as by a mighty torrent ; yea, I daily and hourly did it without any provocation at all, and frequently not knowing what I did. The poor drunken apostate was often so shocked that one time he said, ' I wish you were out of my house ; for you are such a horrid swearer I cannot bear you.' How astonishing is it that a person who had ever known the fear of God did not instantly turn such a wretch out of doors, that the earth did not then open and swallow him up alive,

and that an infinitely holy God did not take him at his word and send him quick into hell, to reap that punishment he had so long deserved, yea, and so often wished for, dared, and defied!

As I was going along one night I met a multitude of people, and asked one of them where they had been. She answered, 'To hear Mr. Whitefield.' She also told me he was to preach the next night. I thought, 'I have often heard of Mr. Whitefield, and have sung songs about him; I will go and hear what he has to say.' Accordingly I went the next evening, but was too late. The following evening I was determined to be in time: accordingly I went near three hours before the time. When the service began I did little but look about me; but on seeing the tears trickle down the cheeks of some who stood near me, I became more attentive.

The text was, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' When this sermon began I was certainly a dreadful enemy to God and to all that is good, and one of the most profligate and abandoned young men living; but by the time it was ended I was become a new creature. For, in the first place, I was deeply convinced of the great goodness of God towards me all my life, particularly in that He had given His Son to die for me. I had also a far clearer view of all my sins, particularly my base ingratitude towards Him. These discoveries quite broke my heart, and caused showers of tears to trickle down my cheeks. I was likewise filled with an utter abhorrence of my evil ways, and was much ashamed that ever I had walked in them. And as my

heart was thus turned from all evil, so it was powerfully inclined to all that is good. It is not easy to express what strong desires I had for God and His service, and what resolutions I had to seek and serve Him in future; in consequence of which I broke off all my evil practices, and forsook all my wicked and foolish companions without delay, and gave myself up to God and His service with my whole heart. O what reason have I to say, 'Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'

When I returned to my lodgings the people saw that something remarkable had befallen me, and, as they knew not where I had been, could not imagine what it was. They were greatly astonished the following days on seeing me weep almost incessantly. They first judged that I had lost some near relation; but when I told them I had not, they judged it to be some disappointment in love. At last they found, by my great reformation, that it was a concern for religion which so deeply affected me. When they put it to me, I frankly told them the whole matter; and though the best of them was but half-hearted in religion, yet they all rejoiced at the mighty change they saw in me.

The first Sunday after I was awakened I went to the cathedral at six in the morning. When the *Te Deum* was read I felt as if I had done with earth, and was praising God before His throne! No words can set forth the joy, the rapture, the awe, and reverence I felt. At eight I went to hear Mr. Whitefield; at ten I went to Christchurch. When the invitation to the Lord's supper, which

was to be administered the next Sunday, was read it pierced my very heart, and caused me to weep bitterly. At the same time I determined, at all events, to partake of it. I went to church again at two in the afternoon; at five I again heard Mr. Whitefield, and concluded the public worship of that day at an Anabaptist meeting. Thus, though I had spent the whole Friday before in the works of the devil, now, partly by hearing the word, and partly by reading, meditation, and abundance of private prayer, I spent the whole of this day in acts of most fervent devotion.

The next day I bought a *Week's Preparation*, which for a long time I read on my knees, both by day and by night. This and the Bible were far more precious to me than rubies, and God only knows how often I bedewed them with my tears—especially those parts of them which speak of the love or sufferings of Christ.

As to secret prayer, I was for some time almost continually on my knees. By this means I soon grew lame on one knee, and went about limping; in a short time my other knee failed, so that it was with difficulty I walked at all. And so earnest was I that I used by the hour together to wrestle with all the might of my body and soul, till I almost expected to die on the spot. What with bitter cries (unheard by any but God and myself), together with torrents of tears, which were almost continually trickling down my cheeks, my throat was often dried up, as David says, and my eyes literally failed, while I waited for God.

As I had just before been so notoriously abandoned, none of my carnal acquaintance had much

objection to my reformation, only some of them thought I carried matters too far. One said, 'You may repent of your sins without so much weeping, and without walking the streets with your hat slouched about your ears.' The young man who came with me from Wrexham lay near my heart. Whenever he came in my way I used to reason with him about the necessity of repentance. I would entreat him with all the love and tenderness my soul was capable of, and while I was doing it I sometimes seemed as if I could weep my life away over him; but, though he took it in good part, I could not prevail on him to leave his sins and to walk with me in the way to heaven.

The love I had for Mr. Whitefield was inexpressible. I used to follow him as he walked the streets, and could scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet. And as to the people of God, I dearly loved to be with them, and wished to be a member of their society, but knew not how to accomplish it. At last I ventured to mention it to one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers, but he discouraged me, and therefore I was obliged to give it up.

After three or four months I left Bristol, and went to Bradford, in Wiltshire. As I went I fell in company with some who were going thither, and asked if there were any Methodists in Bradford; and on their telling me there were, I rejoiced exceedingly. When I had got to Bradford I soon found out the place of preaching, and embraced the first opportunity of hearing the word; and so constant was I therein that for two years, I believe, I did not omit a single sermon, either

late or early. I also heard with deep attention, and in general with many tears. And this I did wherever I heard the word preached, whether at church or elsewhere.

My custom was, when I went to the house of God, to fall on my knees, and with great humility and earnestness of soul to implore a blessing upon what I was going to hear; I then rose up, and fixed my eyes on the preacher, and scarcely ever moved them till all was over. This occasioned a gentleman of the town, whom I reproved for swearing, to say, 'When you come to church, you fix your eyes on the parson, and never move them till he has done.'

As to the people of God in this place, I loved them as dearly as I did those I had left in Bristol; and longed to be united with them in Christian fellowship, but knew not how. When the public preaching was over on a Sunday evening, and I, along with the multitude, was shut out from the society, I used to go into the field at the back of the preaching-house, and listen while they sang the praises of God. I would then weep bitterly at the thought that God's people were there, praising His name together, while I, a poor and wretched fugitive, was not permitted to be among them. I would then look upon the house, and think, 'Under that blessed roof the servants of God are now assembled; but I, alas, a foolish virgin, am shut out!' and then I would weep again, as if my heart would burst within me. When they came out I have often followed at a small distance those of them I thought most in earnest, particularly the preacher and his

company, that I might hear something further concerning the ways of God. I often followed them near two miles, and then returned praising God for this further instruction I had picked up, as it were by stealth, and meditating thereon all the way home.

After some time I was taken notice of by some of the principal members of the society, who desired some young men to inquire who I was. They did so, and also asked me if I desired to join the society. My heart leaped for joy on hearing that, and I told them I should be exceedingly glad to do it. They then took me to the preacher, who gave me a note of admittance, which I received with great thankfulness. As I returned home, just as I came to the bottom of the hill at the entrance of the town, a ray of light, resembling the shining of a star, descended through a small opening in the heavens, and instantaneously shone upon me. In that instant my burden fell off, and I was so elevated that I felt as if I could literally fly away to heaven. This was the more surprising to me as I had always been (what I still am) so prejudiced in favour of rational religion as not to regard visions or revelations, perhaps, so much as I ought to do. But this light was so clear, and the sweetness and other effects attending it were so great, that, though it happened about twenty-seven years ago, the several circumstances thereof are as fresh on my remembrance as if they had happened but yesterday.

I now thought myself happy, as I had got among the people of God and had received such

a token of His favour. But these things were so far from making me secure or careless that they stirred me up to greater diligence in all the works of God. For now, partly by the public preaching, partly by the various exhortations I received in the society, and partly by conversing with the people in private, I received more light, and my conscience grew more abundantly tender. Therefore in my actions I could not do an act of injustice—no, not to the value of a pin ; or in any instance do to another what I would not he should do unto me. In my words I could not mention the name of God but when it was necessary, nor even then but with deep awe and reverence ; and as to jesting and foolish talking, mentioning the faults of an absent person, talking of worldly things on the Lord's day, these I abstained from with all my might. As to my thoughts, intentions, and desires, my constant inquiry was, ' Is this thought, intention, or desire to the glory of God ? ' If I found it was not, I durst not indulge it. In eating and drinking I took care to do it to the glory of God : to this end I received my daily food nearly in the same manner as I did the body and blood of Christ. As to mental prayer, I used it daily and hourly ; and for one while my rule was to employ five minutes out of every quarter of an hour therein. I also made it matter of conscience to examine myself daily, and to humble myself before God for everything I saw or feared had been amiss. Upon the whole, I truly lived by faith. I saw God in everything ; the heavens, the earth, and all therein showed me something of Him—yea,

even from a drop of water, a blade of grass, or a grain of sand I often received instruction.

As a member of the society, I was careful not only to receive strength from them, but also to stir them up to greater diligence. Among other things, I used to run over a great part of the town to call them up to the morning preaching. If I found any of them guilty of evil-speaking, or of mentioning news or worldly business on the Sabbath, or of useless conversation, I always gave them a very serious and loving reproof, at the same time advising them to be more watchful for the time to come. If I heard the people of the world swear, or take the name of God in vain, I always made it matter of conscience to reprove them lovingly and earnestly, and in the most unexceptionable language I could use.

But, notwithstanding all that God had done for me on the one hand, and all that I had done on the other, I was still liable to doubt of the favour of God. Early one morning, as I read in the *Pilgrim's Progress* concerning the happy death of Christian, I wept bitterly, for fear my latter end would not be like his. I continued weeping for six or seven hours. At last my doubt turned into despair: I imagined that there was no mercy for me, that Christ died for all but me! I then wept bitterly, and wished, 'O that I had been anybody else! then there would have been mercy for me.' At last I began to murmur against God; and I was tempted to speak and think blasphemously of Him, and to resolve to pray no more. But going into my chamber and seeing a New Testament lie in the

window, I thought, 'I will open it, and perhaps I shall see something that will do me good.' I took it up, but instantly threw it down again, for fear of meeting with something that would aggravate, rather than remove, my despair. However, I at last ventured to take it up, and on opening it cast my eyes on those words of St. Paul: 'Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' This struck me exceedingly; on which I reasoned thus: 'Will God have all men to be saved? Then I am not excluded. Did Christ give Himself for all? Then He gave Himself for me. And is He to be testified in due time? Then I believe that in due time He will again reveal Himself to me.' But what struck me most of all were those words in the following verse: 'I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.' These words tore up by the roots my temptation to pray no more, to be wrathful against God, and to doubt of His mercy. I therefore fell on my knees before Him, and prayed and wept in earnest; and rose up much ashamed of my unbelief, and greatly encouraged to hope in His mercy. Some time after, when I was got again into doubts and fears, I opened my Testament on these words: 'Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.' I laid fast hold on those words—'the grace which is to be brought

unto you.' From this time I fully believed that all the grace I wanted would be brought unto me. It was not long after this that I heard Mr. William Roberts preach, when he strongly exhorted us to believe, and to venture on the mercy of God. In that instant I did lay hold; I did venture to believe more fully than ever I had done before, and fear and sorrow fled away.

From my first awakening I had a great desire to tell the world what God had done for my soul. And as I grew more experienced this desire grew stronger and stronger. At last I thought I was called to preach: this I communicated to the young men that met in band with me. They proposed a day of solemn fasting on the occasion, which we accordingly kept. They then advised me to make a trial. I did so; and many approved of my gifts, but others thought I ought to be more established. Indeed, it was often said that I was too earnest to hold it long; and instances were produced of some who had been exceedingly earnest for a season, but afterwards fell away. At the time I began to preach my custom was to get all my worldly business done, myself cleaned, and all my Sunday apparel put out on Saturday night, which sometimes I could not accomplish before twelve o'clock. After this I frequently sat up till one or two in the morning, reading, praying, and examining myself; and have often rose at four, but never later than five o'clock, and gone two miles into the country, through all weathers, to meet a few poor people, from six to seven. By eight I returned to hear the preaching. I have then gone seven miles on foot to preach

at one ; then three or four miles farther to preach at five ; and after all, have had five or six miles more to walk before I got home. And as in everything I did I put forth all my strength, I have been often so wearied that I could scarce get over a stile ; or when I got home, go up into my chamber to ask a blessing on the labours of the day. Indeed, before I began to preach I was so earnest in all acts of public and private worship that on a Sunday night I was commonly more wearied than on any other night in the week.

For some time after I began to preach I had frequent doubts concerning my call. One time, as I was going to preach at Coleford, I was tempted to believe that I was running before I was sent. As I went on the temptation grew stronger and stronger. At last I resolved to turn back. I had not gone back above thirty or forty yards, before I began to think, 'This may be a temptation of the devil.' On that I took out my Testament, and on opening it the words I cast my eyes on were 'He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.' I could not help looking on this as the voice of God to me ; therefore I took courage to turn about, and pursue my journey to Coleford.

When I had been a local preacher about twelve months the small-pox made dreadful havoc in and about Bradford. So universal was the infection that in all that populous town, and the neighbouring villages, scarce a single person escaped who had not had it before. It was also so mortal that six or seven were buried in a night

in Bradford only. As I had never had it, it was often suggested to me to leave those parts; but I thought, 'I am in the hands of a wise and gracious God, and also in the place where His providence has fixed me; and therefore, whether I live or die, I will continue where I am, and commit myself to His wise disposal.'

About a week after Michaelmas I was taken ill, and in the beginning was very comfortable in my soul. It was soon discovered that I should have a vast quantity, occasioned, as was supposed, by the ill-management of an ignorant old woman, who gave me heating things. I had not been ill above a day or two before that pattern of practical Christianity, Mr. Richard Pearce, came to see me. Among other things he asked what money I had. I said, 'But little.' He then encouraged me not to fear, telling me that, as I was far from my own country, he would take care I had all things necessary. Accordingly he turned away the old woman, and sent me one of the best nurses in the town. He next sent the chief apothecary the place afforded; and lastly, Dr. Clark, the most experienced physician in all that country. But, notwithstanding all these helps, I was soon one of the most deplorable objects ever seen. I was stone-blind for five weeks; my head was swelled to such an enormous size that many thought it would drop from my shoulders; my whole body was covered with one scab, a great part of an inch thick; and though the room I lay in was large and airy, the stench was so great that, though the town was full of the small-pox, neither the doctor nor apothecary could

come near me without stopping their mouths and noses as close as they were able. Many others who came to see me ran downstairs vomiting, and some declared they never smelt a carrion in a ditch which was so offensive. Mrs. Antill, at whose house I lodged, told me and my family, a day or two ago, that though she came only occasionally into my room, yet, when she went out into the town on an errand, the smell of her clothes was so offensive that the people could scarce bear to meet her, and that when she returned such a stream of noxious effluvia met her in the front-door that she was scarce able to enter her house. It is therefore no wonder that all who saw or heard of me judged that I was, by many degrees, the most afflicted of any who lived or died, either in town or country. Dr. Clark declared, 'Though I have been fifty years in practice, I never saw any one so ill of this disorder before.'

The first time I was got up, to have my bed made, was on New Year's Day; but I was not near recovered at Lady Day. Yet all this time, though I was so extremely afflicted, I was never known to give one groan, and but once (Mrs. Antill says not once) to say I was ill; my constant answer to all who asked me how I did was, 'I am indifferent.' This made a great noise both in town and country; for the doctor, apothecary, and others often mentioned this circumstance when others complained. Yea, Mrs. Antill told us that long after I was recovered, and had left the country, Dr. Clark often mentioned, with astonishment, how quiet I lay, and what answers

I constantly gave, though I was so dreadfully afflicted.

From this account we learn, first, that none ought to give or take anything heating in the beginning of this disorder. Secondly, that while there is life none ought to despair of recovering, however ill they are. And, thirdly, that no degree of affliction is too great for the grace of God to enable us to bear with resignation, meekness, and quietness.

Before my conversion I had contracted a great number of debts, and by means of this illness they were greatly multiplied. This was a cause of great uneasiness to me; and, in particular, whenever I read or heard that Scripture, 'Owe no man anything,' I felt as great confusion, shame, and sorrow as if I had actually stolen every sum I owed. As soon, therefore, as I was able I set out for my own country to receive my fortune, which had lain so long in Mr. Tudor's hands. As I passed through the country I preached in most of the societies which lay in my way, and believe it was not altogether in vain.

When I got home my old acquaintance got about me; but when they saw such an alteration in me they were astonished, and the more so as they had never seen the like before. As soon as I had received my money, I bought a horse, and rode far and near, paying all I owed in my own country. This made a great noise, and confirmed the people in their opinion that the change they saw in me was of God. My uncle Tudor, indeed, attributed it to another cause. He said, 'Thou hast been so wicked that thou hast seen

the devil, and that has occasioned so great a change in thee.' At last my aunt Tudor and others desired me to preach the next Sabbath day; to which I consented. On Saturday I fell in company with Lord Hereford, who had heard that I was turned Methodist and was going to preach in the parish. He damned me, and swore if there was a pool of water near he would throw me in. I was going to reply, but he would not suffer me. As we were going the same way, I followed at a distance; and every now and then he turned about, swearing that he would put me in the stocks, and send me to prison. When we came near a pinfold, where there was a pair of stocks, I turned over a stile to a neighbour's house; on this my lord swore that if they took me in he would drive the country of them. I therefore judged it prudent to turn another way.

The next day I went with my uncle Tudor to church and sacrament; I went with him also to evening prayers. Just as the minister was concluding, his lordship came to church. As soon as the people were got out, my lord said, 'Mr. Tudor, why do you harbour that fellow about your house?' My uncle answered, 'Where should he be, my lord, but at home?' He then desired my uncle to send me out of the parish; but my uncle said, 'He is in his own parish, my lord, and about his own business.' On this I stepped forward. When my lord saw me, he said, 'Wh—wh—wh—wh—why dost thou dress like a parson?' (For I was dressed in blue.) I said, 'What I wear, my lord, is my own, and not your lordship's.' He said, 'If thou dost not leave

the country, I will send thee to the stocks.' I answered, 'I regard not the stocks, my lord; your lordship may send me to Montgomery, if you please. But before I go I must tell your lordship that I was shocked exceedingly yesterday on hearing a person of your rank, who is also a magistrate, curse and swear as your lordship did when you saw me on the common.' As this conversation passed in the presence of almost the whole parish, many were well pleased to hear my lord so plainly dealt with; but my lord himself was enraged exceedingly, and called for one and another to come and take me to the stocks; but several of those he called ran away. At last he said to his footman, 'Go you, and take him away'; and then called one of his tenants, 'John Parry! John Parry! I say, John Parry! come you, and take him to the stocks.' I smiled, and said, 'My lord, you need not call these lusty men; for if you send a child it will do as well, seeing I shall make no resistance.' When we were gone a little way the footman swore he had much rather carry his master to the devil than me to the stocks, and Mr. Parry swore the same. I said, 'Pray do not curse and swear, or you will be as bad as my lord.' But what was most remarkable, though such a multitude of young and old were present, so universally was my lord's conduct disapproved of that not one of them went with us but my aunt Tudor, nor did any one come after us but another uncle.

When we came to the stocks my aunt said, 'What do you now intend to do?' Mr. Parry said, 'We must put him in, or run the country.'

She said : ' You and I have lived in friendship for many years, and I shall be sorry now to hurt you. Go, therefore, and ask my lord if he will indemnify you ; for if he is put in, somebody shall pay for it.' Mr. Parry went, and found my lord had taken the parson and my uncle Tudor into the public-house, where the parson, who had administered the sacrament that day, tarried drinking with my lord from four in the afternoon till eleven at night ; and my uncle, who had received it, till seven the next morning. This I mention as a sad specimen of the religion of my native country. When Mr. Parry came to my lord he asked, ' Have you put him in ? ' Mr. Parry answered, ' No, my lord, for I am threatened.' On this my lord jumped up, and drew his sword ; and away ran the farmer, and my lord after him, both cursing and swearing like devils. When Mr. Parry returned my aunt asked, ' Well ! what are you to do ? ' He cursed my lord, and said, ' Do ! we must put him in ! ' The footman swore, ' I will never put him in ' ; and the farmer did the same. And as I was quite passive and cheerful, my aunt said, ' Thou shalt not put thyself in.' I answered, ' This is very hard ! I am to go into the stocks ; and you both swear you will not put me in, and my aunt says I shall not put myself in. Well, then, I will tell you how it shall be : one of you shall hold up the stocks, and the other shall take hold of my leg, and by so doing you shall both put me in.' After scratching their heads, they consented. Accordingly one of them lifted up the

stocks, and the other put his hand under the calf of my leg, and just put it in, and then bade me take it out again. However, we stood near the stocks the whole time, which was two hours, talking about religion. Among other things, Mr. Parry said, 'It is a pity you did not tell the people you would preach in the stocks.' I said, 'It is very true, and I am sorry I did not think of it.'

The next morning, through my aunt's persuasion, I rode to Montgomery to an attorney; but he not being at home, my uncle advised me to let the matter drop—and, indeed, I was easily persuaded to do this, as I found so little of the spirit of resentment.

A few years ago Mrs. Glynne,[1] of Shrewsbury, told me that Lord Hereford told her the affair, and added that if any more of them came into his parish he would serve them in the same manner. She said: 'My lord, you judge of this people according to the idle reports you hear of them; but I know them to be the servants of the living God. Therefore, my lord, beware what you do, or God will punish you one day or other.' He paused awhile, and then said, 'Cousin Glynne, if I had known this before, I would not have done what I did; but for the time to come I will have nothing to do with them.'

After I had paid every farthing I owed in my own country I went to Shrewsbury to do the same. But many in that place had quite for-

[1] Widow of Edward Glynne, died at Shrewsbury, 1799, age 81.—*Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, iv. 217.

gotten me, as well as what I owed them. Those I had defrauded by any unlucky trick I told them of it, paid the full value, and offered them interest, if it was only for a few shillings. One instance of this was: a companion of mine had defrauded a Quaker of a shilling; and because I was concerned in laying the scheme, I thought I ought to pay him. When I went to inquire for him, I found him in jail, and told him the whole affair. I then paid the shilling, and offered him interest, which he refused. He then asked me, 'Who art thou? Art thou the young man who preached in the Methodist meeting, concerning whom there is so much noise in the town?' I said, 'I am.' He said, 'Wilt thou come next first-day, and preach to the prisoners?' I said, 'I will.' Accordingly I went and preached in the prison chapel, and many were glad to hear what God had done for my soul. Indeed, I found that going to a place and paying every one what I owed him was frequently a means of great good, especially as I was always careful, when people thanked me, to commend the grace of God, telling them, 'You ought to thank God, for if He had not converted me I never should have thought of paying you.'

From Shrewsbury I went to Whitchurch, on purpose to pay sixpence. I then went to Wrexham, and satisfied every one there. Next I rode to Chester and Liverpool, and preached often in both places. In the first of them several persons were turned from the evil of their way. I then went to Manchester, and from thence to Birmingham, and so on to Bristol. When

I had paid all I owed in this city I returned to Bradford. I went to Mr. Pearce [1] immediately, and told him all I had done. I then asked him for his account; but he bade me go and satisfy every other creditor. I did so; but when I came again he told me he had no account against me. I saw the hand of God in this; for I had already paid about seventy debts, which I could not accomplish till I had sold my horse, bridle, and saddle. However, I was at last clear of the world; and by that means was delivered from a burden which had lain heavy upon me ever since my conversion, and which had cost me many prayers and tears.

With the small remains of my money, and with a little credit, I set up in my business. But before I was half settled in it Mr. Wesley desired I would give it up, and go immediately into Cornwall.[2] I was glad of the opportunity, as believing it to be the will of God concerning me. I therefore disposed of my effects, and paid the few debts I had again contracted. But I was not able to buy another horse; and therefore, with my boots on my legs, my greatcoat on my back, and my saddle-bags, with my books and linen, across my shoulder, I set out on foot, October 24, 1753.

From Bradford I went to Coleford, and from thence to Tiverton. I had not been many weeks there before Mr. Bidgood asked me why I had not a horse. I told him frankly the truth of the matter. He then desired me to buy one, and he would pay for him. I begged to be

[1] See p. 189. [2] See p. 189.

excused from accepting such an offer, but he still urged me. I then told him I would consult a friend; I did so, and was advised to accept the offer. A few days after I went with a farmer into his field. In a few minutes a colt, about two years and a half old, came to me and put his nose upon my shoulder. I stroked him, and asked the farmer what he would take for him. He said, 'Five pounds.' We struck a bargain at once, and in a few days I mounted my horse, and have kept him to this day, which is about twenty-five years. On him I have travelled, comfortably, not less than a hundred thousand miles in preaching the gospel. In this also I see the hand of God: for I parted with one horse rather than bring a reproach on the gospel, and as a reward He provided me such another as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of.

While I laboured in Devonshire I met with some trials. As I was preaching out-of-doors on Christmas Day, at South Molton, a gentleman's servant rushed through the crowd and put a letter into my hand. On opening it at my lodgings, I found a string in it; and after the writer had fully exerted himself in pouring out a flood of low abuse, he begged that I would do him the favour to hang myself in the string he had sent me. Some years after the gentleman at whose house I lodged told me that this same man was killed in a fray with his master. From hence I went to North Molton; and while I was preaching in a large Baptist meeting a fellow of an infamous character came in and

made use of a great deal of abusive language. When I had done preaching he and a large mob followed us through the streets, throwing whatever came first to hand. A few days after my return to Tiverton a messenger came to let me know that the fellow above mentioned had got a warrant from the mayor to make me pay for three oaths I had sworn in the pulpit. The first was, 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God.' The second, 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' And the third, 'They that have done evil shall go to the resurrection of damnation.' And for these I was to pay five shillings each; for though while I was in the pulpit, he said, I was a mere vagabond, now I was to be brought to justice he would treat me like a gentleman!

While I was at dinner one day at Collumpton I was dreadfully tempted to believe that I was not called to preach. I then thought, 'This food does not belong to me, and therefore I am a thief and a robber in eating it.' I then burst into tears, and could eat no more. As I was to preach at one o'clock, I went to the preaching-house, weeping all the way. I also went weeping into the pulpit, and wept sore while I gave out the hymn, when I was at prayer, and when I preached. The congregation was soon as deeply affected as I was myself, and many of them roared aloud for the disquietness of their souls; so that I have reason to believe God brought much good out of that temptation.

From Devonshire I went into Cornwall, where I laboured hard; and though I cannot boast

of abundant success, yet some were both convinced and converted.

As to trials, I do not remember that I had any in these parts which deserve that name. Indeed, in one place the high constable came to press me for a soldier while I was preaching. He said, 'As you preach so well, you are very fit to serve His Majesty. I therefore desire you will get ready to go with me to a magistrate to-morrow morning.' I answered, 'Why not to-night? I am ready to go with you now.' He then said, 'Well, you may first finish your sermon.' Accordingly I began again where I had left off, and the constable and his companion stayed to hear me, and then went quietly away. The next morning I waited for his return, but he never came; so that in all probability what he heard was a means, at least, of cooling his courage.

While I was in this circuit I dreamed one night that Christ was come in the clouds to judge the world, and also that He looked exceeding black at me. When I awoke I was much alarmed. I therefore humbled myself exceedingly, with fastings and prayer, and was determined never to give over till my evidence of the love of Christ was made quite clear. One day as I was at prayer in my room, with my eyes shut, the Lord, as it were, appeared to the eye of my mind as standing just before me, while ten thousand small streams of blood seemed to issue from every part of His body. This sight was so unexpected, and at the same time so seasonable, that for once I wept aloud; yea, and

almost fainted away. I now more fully believed His love to me, and that if He was then to come to judgement He would not frown, but rather smile on me: therefore I loved and praised Him with all my heart.

Some years after I had a dream of a quite different sort. I dreamed that I was talking with two women concerning the day of judgement. Among other things I thought I told them I was certain it was very near. On hearing this I thought they burst into laughter and rejected all I said. Being much grieved at this, I told them, 'I will go and see if it is not as I have said.' Accordingly I went to the door, and, on looking up southward, thought I saw the heavens open, and a stream of fire, as large as a small river, issuing forth. On seeing this I thought I ran back to the women, and said, 'You would not believe me; but come to the door, and you will see with your own eyes that the day is come.' On hearing this I thought they were much alarmed, and ran with me to the door. By the time we were got thither I thought the whole concave southward was filled with an exceedingly thick, fiery mist, which swiftly moved northward in a huge body, filling the whole space between the heavens and the earth as it came along. As it drew near I thought, 'The day is come of which I have so often told the world, and now in a few moments I shall see how it will be with me to all eternity!' and for a moment I seemed to feel myself in a state of awful suspense. When the fire was come close to me I was going to shrink back,

but thought, 'This is all in vain, as there is now no place of shelter left.' I then pushed myself forward into it, and found that the fire had no power to hurt me, for I stood as easy in the midst of it as ever I did in the open air. The joy I felt on being able to stand unhurt and undismayed amidst this awful burning cannot be described. Even so shall it be with all who are careful to enter in at the strait gate, and to walk closely and steadily in the narrow way all the days of their life: all these shall

> Stand secure, and smile,
> Amidst the jarring elements,
> The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds!

From Cornwall I was sent to Norwich. While I was here I went one Sabbath day to Yarmouth. As I went along my companion every now and then cried out, 'I shall be murdered and go to hell this day, for I know not the Lord!' For the people of Yarmouth had often said that 'if any Methodist came there he should never return alive.' When we got to the town we went to the church. I then went into the market-place, and gave out a hymn. While I sung and prayed the multitude was tolerably quiet, but as soon as I had taken my text they began to be very rude. In a short time a friend pulled me down. After staying awhile at another friend's house I sent for my horse: the mob followed him, and soon filled the alley where he was brought. As soon as I was mounted he drove the mob before him; but the women stood in their doors, some with both hands full of dirt, and others with bowls

of water, which they threw at me as I passed by. When we got into the open street we had such a shower of stones, sticks, apples, turnips, potatoes, &c., as I never saw before or since. My fellow traveller galloped out of the town as fast as he was able ; but I watched the motions of the sticks and stones which were likely to hit me, so as to preserve a regular retreat. When I overtook my companion we were thankful that we escaped with our lives, as were our friends in Norwich on seeing us return.

My next remove was to London, where I continued till August. What service I was of here I cannot tell ; only I remember that under a sermon I preached in the Foundery that good man and useful preacher, Mr. Joseph Guildford, was awakened.[1]

At our Conference in 1756 I was appointed for Ireland. I spent the year in and about Limerick, Waterford, and Cork. In the first of these places God was pleased to own my labours much. Many of the soldiers, as well as others, were converted to God.

At the next Conference I was again stationed for London. In my way thither I stopped at Whitehaven. Here I was greatly tried, from a particular quarter ; but I was more than conqueror through Him who had loved me, and was frequently refreshed in my soul, and, in some measure, blessed in my labours.

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[1] Wesley writes, *Journal*, May 18, 1777: 'In the afternoon I buried the body of Joseph Guildford, a holy man, and a useful preacher. Surely never before did a man of so weak talents do so much good ! He died, as he lived, in the full triumph of faith, vehemently rejoicing and praising God.'

people detained me about six weeks. All that time I was very much followed ; yet I cannot say that the word was more, if so much, blessed as it had been in many other places. At last I reached London ; but my Leeds friends wrote to Mr. Wesley to send me back. When he proposed it to me I consented. But as I was appointed to do several things which were very disagreeable to some in power, this lost me many of my kindest friends, and was a source of great uneasiness to me for many years.

From my first awakening I was almost singular in my notions of marriage. I thought that young people did not consult reason and the will of God so much as their own foolish inclinations. When I mentioned these things to my young acquaintance they thought my notions were romantic and chimerical. However, I determined, if ever I married, to act according to the rules I had so often laid down for others. My first inquiry, therefore, was, 'Am I called to marry at this time ?' Here I weighed the reasons on both sides, and then concluded in the affirmative. I then inquired, 'What sort of a person ought I to marry ?' To this I answered in general, 'To such a one as Christ would choose for me, suppose He was on earth, and was to undertake that business.' I then asked, 'But what sort of a person have I reason to believe He would choose for me ?' Here I fixed on the following properties, and ranged them in the following order, placing that first which I judged to be of most value in the sight of God, and that last which I thought of smallest importance. The first was

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grace. I was quite certain that no preacher of God's word ought, on any consideration, to marry one who is not eminently gracious. The second, that she ought to have tolerably good common sense. A Methodist preacher in particular, who travels into all parts, and sees such a variety of company, I believed, ought not to take a fool with him. Thirdly, as I knew the natural warmth of my own temper, I concluded that a wise and gracious God would not choose a companion for me who would throw oil, but rather water, upon the fire. Fourthly, I judged that, as I was connected with a poor people, the will of God was that whoever I married should have a small competency, to prevent my making the gospel chargeable to any.

Having proceeded thus far, my next inquiry was, 'But who is the person in whom these properties are thus found in the most eminent degree?' I immediately turned my eyes to Miss Green, a person of a good family, and noted through all the north of England for her extraordinary piety. I therefore opened my mind to her; and, after consulting Mr. Wesley, we were married. As in this affair I consulted reason and the will of God so impartially, I have had abundant reason to be thankful ever since.

As soon as I was married I went into Lancashire, where I laboured about a year. The greatest outward trial I had here was the decay of my health. Sometimes I was so ill that when I left one place to go to another the people took a final farewell of me, as not expecting me to live to come round again at the end of three weeks or

a month. However, I kept my circuit in general, which included a great part of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and daily did therein the whole work of a healthy man. But though I have not much to say concerning my usefulness this year, yet some were awakened and brought to God who stand to this day.

From hence I went into the York Circuit, in 1760. At that time I was thought to be near the last stage of a consumption; and as I had about three hundred miles to ride every six weeks, and about sixty societies to take care of, few thought I should be able to go once round. But I said, 'I am determined to go as far as I can, and when I can go no farther I will turn back.' Accordingly I entered upon my work, which was enough to try the strongest constitution. By the time I had got about half-way round I found that violent labour got me a little appetite, yea, and caused me to sleep better, so that I began to gather flesh before I got to the end of my circuit. But my recovery was exceedingly gradual; for as I had been declining from the time I had the small-pox, which was about eight years, so I was about twelve more before I was quite recovered.

My next remove was to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Here I had many mercies and comforts, and a few trials. In one place I was obliged to put thirty-five members out of the society; and if I had not laboured hard, and exercised great patience, we should have lost about two hundred in that one place. But though I had the express order of Mr. Wesley for what I did, and acted with great integrity on the one hand and tenderness on the

other, I lost many of my dearest friends, who from that time became my bitterest enemies. But I must say (in honour of the grace of God) that friends and enemies have always been alike to me when I thought the glory of God was concerned.

From Newcastle I went home to Leeds, where I laboured a whole year. But as several persons still retained their old prejudices against me, my labour here was now rather uncomfortable. However, though I cannot say I was of any great service this year, yet I had some fruit in several places.

The year following I was stationed in Bristol. I believe I was never so likely to do good as at this time; but I was removed, and spent the remainder of the year in Leeds. In 1760 I buried my first child here, and this year I buried the other. The next year I spent in London and Colchester. In the last of these places we enjoyed great poverty and great peace, and had many comfortable opportunities of waiting on God, both in public and private. In London I had friends and enemies, comforts and trials; but the greatest trial of all was the hardness of my deceitful heart, which I sometimes felt in an eminent degree.

At the Manchester Conference I was appointed for Scotland. The two years I tarried here I spent in and about Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. While I was in Edinburgh[1] I was remarkably

[1] Wesley writes to Christopher Hopper, January 16, 1782: 'I am glad you have had a free conversation with T. Olivers. There is good in him, though he is a rough stick of wood. But love can bow down the stubborn neck.'—*Works*, xii. 305.

earnest in private prayer one night. The next morning I awoke about four o'clock, and said to myself, 'I will lie here no longer, but rise and call upon God.' In an instant I was filled with such sweetness as I had not tasted for a long time. I hastened to put on my clothes, and fell on my knees before God, and, with tears of gratitude, thanked Him with my whole heart. The effect of this visitation lasted a considerable time, and was of great use to me, both in preaching and living. Some time after, as I was preaching on the barren fig-tree, a few words proceeded from me in such a manner as I can scarcely describe. The congregation seemed as if they had been electrified. One who had long been bowed down cried out amain, and said afterwards that under those words she felt as if she was just dropping into hell! I have since thought that if the word was always attended with such power, very few would stand before it. While I was in this circuit I spent two or three nights in Glasgow, and one person, at least, was converted to God in that time. As to Aberdeen, I can only say my labours were often comfortable to myself. What use they were of to others will be fully known in due time.

While I was here I found out that Dr. Memis was the person who, under God, saved my life many years ago when I was ill at Wrexham.[1] When I first went to his house we remembered nothing of each other. However, in conversing about our travels, and on comparing circumstances together, I found that he was the person to whom

[1] See p. 201.

I owed so much. On this discovery I felt great love to my old benefactor ; but the doctor himself was not able to recollect anything of the affair. O how many right actions which God's people have wrought are now forgotten of them, which, nevertheless, are noted in His book, and shall be brought to light in that day when He ' shall reward every man according to his works ! '

In Dundee I laboured comfortably among a poor, quiet, earnest, and happy people. Here I fell into intimate acquaintance with Mr. T., minister of one of the churches in that town. Our friendly interviews, our Christian conversations, our free and candid debates, together with the kind treatment I almost daily received at his house, I shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude. Nor shall I ever forget the last sermon I preached in that town : such liberty I never felt before or since. I had such an absolute command of my ideas, language, voice, and gesture that I could say what I would, and also in what manner I pleased ! What good, if any, was then done I know not now, but shall know another day.

From Scotland I went over to Dublin. Here the Lord began to bless my labours almost as soon as I arrived. In a very few weeks a considerable number were awakened, and others received a sense of the favour of God. But my fellow labourer and I were grieved to see so much levity among many of our friends, and determined to oppose it. Accordingly we preached against it with all our might. We determined also to show, by our example, how Christians ought to

be serious, and to take up their cross daily. But J. Morgan [1] opposed us, by softening the awful truths we delivered: this was very agreeable to the delicate part of our hearers. At last I spoke my mind very freely: the consequence was, he and his friends rose up against me, and quite bore me down.

The next year I came over to Chester, where I was stationed for a year. From hence I went to pay a visit to my own country, and preached in Montgomery, Newtown, Llanidloes, and many other places. In Tregonan, where I was born, I preached once, and had most of the village to hear me. But when Mr. B—n—y, who owned most of the parish, heard of it, he told my uncle, who with my grandfather had lived in that house nearly a hundred years, that if he encouraged me to preach in the village he would turn him out immediately: he also sent a servant to a cousin of mine, who lived in another parish, and told her the same.

When I came to Fordon, the place where I was brought up, I fell in company with the minister, who took me to his house. He said, 'I hear you intend to preach in this parish.' I told him, 'I do; yea, and think it my duty so to do.' He then intimated that I should be punished if I did. I said, 'I am licensed, and therefore will not be hindered by any man in the parish; no, nor by the primate of all England.' He then spoke of the divine right, which was found only in the established clergy of this land. I answered, 'The world, sir, is large, of which England is but

[1] Wesley's *Journal*, June 27, 1769.

a very small part—an island only, stuck up, as it were, in one corner of it! And as to its established clergy, you know, sir, that many of them are worldly-minded to a proverb—yea, that multitudes of them are drunkards, swearers, pleasure-takers, &c.; and yet you tell me that such a clergy, of so inconsiderable a corner of the world, are the only ministers of God, and that all others are intruders and deceivers.' To this he made no answer, so we parted as we met. In a few days I preached in the house of one of Mr. Tudor's daughters, and, I believe, to the satisfaction of most who heard me.

Soon after I returned to Chester my wife was taken ill of a fever. For eight weeks the physician told me every day that there was no hope of her recovery; and she thought herself, for many weeks, that every day would be her last. But this was so far from being matter of sorrow to her that she rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon at her Father's house, and told me frequently that she had much rather die than live; and though, from beginning to end, she was ill fifteen weeks, in all that time I never heard her once complain about the state of her soul. By this sickness I was more clearly convinced of the necessity, not only of faith, but also of a good conscience. Faith, I saw, as a hand, lays hold on Christ, and a good conscience confirms that hold. Hence my wife, who had for so many years kept a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, now lay as on the brink of eternity, quiet and unmoved, like a ship at anchor in the mouth of a harbour, without one blast of

wind to disturb her peace. On the other hand, I saw that an evil conscience causes faith first to weaken its grasp, and then to unloose its hold. Thus it is that in an hour of trial so many make shipwreck of faith, and are filled with doubt and fear; because, by their loose walking, they have put away a good conscience.

The next year I went to Liverpool. Here I enjoyed many mercies and comforts, but I cannot say much of my usefulness. Indeed, one evening, just as I was going into the pulpit at a village, about eight miles out of Liverpool, I was seized with a great spitting of blood. However, as I did not know where it might end, I was determined, if possible, to say something for God once more. Accordingly I began and delivered a few sentences, and then spit out a large quantity of blood; and so I went on for about half an hour. I then, in the best manner I could, commended myself and the people unto God. And as I did not judge it safe to stay that night in a village where help could not be had in case of extreme necessity, I took my horse and returned to Liverpool. Shortly after I heard that one of the most abandoned and noted sinners in those parts was awakened that night. This made a great noise far and near, and was a means of stopping the mouths of many gainsayers, and perhaps of saving some souls from death. On receiving this account, all within me cried out:

> My life, my blood, I here present,
> If for Thy truth they may be spent:
> Fulfil Thy sovereign counsel, Lord!
> Thy will be done, Thy name adored.

From Liverpool I went to the London Conference, and was appointed for the Derby Circuit. But before I left London, I fell into great dejection of spirit, and was for many weeks on the brink of despair. But I cried unto God night and day, and in due time He showed me the light of His countenance once more, for which I hope to praise Him to all eternity. I have also great occasion to be thankful to His people, who sympathized with me, and encouraged me on every side. When my soul was again revived I went into my circuit, and was kindly received. Here I continued for two years, among a loving, happy people, and I have some reason to believe that my labours here were not altogether in vain. From hence I came once more to London, where I continued two years. In the first of these Mr. Toplady paid me a visit at the Foundery, and stayed about three hours. We soon entered on a debate about our different sentiments, which we carried on from first to last without one unkind or uncivil expression. I mentioned several reasons why I could not be a predestinarian ; and as I am still of the same mind, I shall here repeat the substance of them, as some of my present objections to that hypothesis.

The first principle of predestination, I said, is that ' God's sovereignty is, in every sense, absolute and unlimited.' Now, I undertake to demonstrate that in some sense it is not so. For instance, it is certain that though it is not limited by anything without Him, His other attributes, such as His wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love, limit it on every side. Hence it is that

though He is a Sovereign, yet it is impossible that He should be either an unwise, unholy, unjust, untrue, or an unloving Sovereign, which would absolutely be the case if by His mere sovereignty He had decreed sin, reprobation, &c.

The next fundamental of predestination is that ' God, as a mere and an unlimited Sovereign, has decreed whatsoever comes to pass.' Now, as idolatry, blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, murder, adultery, &c., come to pass, according to this principle of predestination, God has decreed them. And as it is certain that all these are forbidden in His Word, it follows, according to this hypothesis, that He has absolutely decreed and expressly forbidden the same things. Now, before I can receive the hypothesis which supposes this, I must clearly see how it is consistent with the wisdom, holiness, justice, truth, and love of God to do this.

Thirdly, because the absolute sovereignty of God has thus decreed everything, predestination represents mankind as not having any of their actions or volitions in their own power, but as being acted upon like mere machines. But God, by giving them instructions, commands, promises, and threatenings, treats them as if they were free and voluntary agents. Now, before I can be a predestinarian I must see how it agrees with the aforesaid attributes of God for His sovereignty to decree that men should be created involuntary beings, and then to deal with them as if they were free.

As Mr. Toplady did not offer any solid answer

to these reasonings, I told him that as an honest man I could not be of his opinion till these difficulties were fully removed. We then parted, as good friends, at least, as we met, and I was told after that he spoke well of me in several places ; but in his next publication I was almost all that is bad !

The next year I went with Mr. Wesley to visit my friends in Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall. This was a very agreeable journey, and I hope it was a profitable one to my old acquaintance, whom I had not seen for many years. After this I spent a year in visiting my friends in various parts of the kingdom, and I believe this labour of love was not in vain. The Conference following I undertook the care of Mr. Wesley's printing. From that time I have been in London ; and between preaching and writing and the care of the press I never laboured harder in all my life. But I find labour good both for body and soul, and therefore I hope to be fully employed as long as I live.

Upon the whole, when I consider how the providence of God provided for me in my infancy, brought me up to the state of man, preserved me from those evils which brought others to an untimely end, directed my wandering steps to the means of my conversion, cast my lot among His people, called me to preach His word, owned my preaching to the conversion of others, stood by me in many trials, brought me back so often from the brink of the grave, healed my manifold backslidings, provided me a suitable companion, and put me in possession of all the necessaries of life—

when I consider these things, I must say, 'Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life; and I hope to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

For several years Mr. Olivers had 'the care of Mr. Wesley's printing.' Mr. Wesley himself selected the matter for the *Arminian Magazine*, and committed it to Mr. Olivers for publication. In this office he did not appear to advantage, and indeed he entered upon it too late in life to afford reasonable hope of success. Having been long accustomed to read merely for the purpose of catching the sense of the authors whom he deemed it requisite to consult, it could hardly be expected that he would readily acquire the habit of that minute attention, not only to words, but also to letters and points, which is necessary to insure typographical accuracy. The mistakes which appeared in the successive numbers of his *Magazine* were, to the correct mind of Mr. Wesley, a perpetual source of vexation. In many instances they presented a complete perversion of the sense, even when subjects of importance were under discussion. He himself prepared, for several of the volumes, a frightful list of errata, which he published for the benefit of the subscribers. Mr. Olivers also occasionally inserted articles on his own responsibility, of which Mr. Wesley did not approve.[1] It is not therefore

[1] Probably private papers, especially a letter from Charles Wesley's daughter, describing his death, of which Mr. Freeman Shepherd complained to Mrs. C. Wesley (*Arminian Magazine*, 1788).—*Proceedings of Wesley Historical Society*, ii. 192.

tune entitled 'Helmsley,' adapted to the hymn beginning,

Lo! He comes with clouds descending,

and contained in Mr. Wesley's *Sacred Harmony*, was composed by Mr. Olivers.[1] As a writer of hymns he was no imitator. His strains of thought and his versification are equally original.

Mr. Olivers's talents secured for him a high degree of respect. Mr. Wesley pronounced him to be a 'full match' for the Rev. Augustus Toplady;[2] and when Sir Richard Hill spoke of him in language of contempt, as 'one Thomas Oliver, alias Olivers,' Mr. Fletcher said, 'This author was, twenty-five years ago, a mechanic, and, like "one" Peter, "alias" Simon, a fisherman, and like "one" Saul, "alias" Paul, a tent-maker, has had the honour of being promoted to the dignity of a preacher of the gospel; and his talents as a writer, a logician, a poet, and a composer of sacred music are known to those who have looked into his publications.'

Mr. Olivers appears to have been distinguished by great firmness and resolution. When Mr. Shirley and some other Calvinist ministers came to the Conference of 1772, which was held in Bristol, for the purpose of obtaining some modi-

[1] His famous tune, 'Helmsley,' which we sing to 'Lo! He comes with clouds descending,' is found in all the leading tune-books, and was a special favourite with Queen Victoria.—Lightwood, *Hymn-Tunes and Their Story*, pp. 138, 141.

[2] Wesley, in a reply to Toplady, says: 'I can only make a few strictures, and leave the young man to be further corrected by one that is full his match, Mr. Thomas Olivers.'—*Works*, x. 370.

fication of the Minutes of the preceding year, and Mr. Wesley, with his preachers in general, agreed to sign a paper which was presented to them for that purpose, Mr. Olivers declared his dissent from the whole affair, and warned his friends that an ill use would be made of their unsuspecting candour. His remonstrances were disregarded at the time; but his friends afterwards found that his apprehensions were unhappily well founded. The following introductory paragraphs to his *Scourge to Calumny, inscribed to Richard Hill, Esq.*, will show his manner of writing, and the kind of treatment which he met with:

Honoured Sir,—On Monday, February 15, I attended the evening prayers at St. Paul's. The psalm for the day was the seventy-eighth. The sublime description of God's power and glory there given, as displayed in behalf of His people through all generations, greatly affected me. I was also much affected at the account the royal penman gave of himself. 'He chose David also His servant,' said he, 'and took him away from the sheepfolds. As he was following the ewes great with young ones, He took him, that he might feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance.'

In this account I scarcely knew which to admire most—the providence of God in raising a shepherd's boy to the dignity of so great a monarch, or the piety of this renowned people in not rejecting and despising him, or his own amazing humility, at a time when he had reached the very summit of worldly glory, in transmitting

to future ages such an explicit account of his mean original. On these reflections, all within me cried out, 'Lord, shall I, shall any servant of Thine, after this, be ashamed of an humble birth, or of a mean employment? Forbid it, gracious God!'

As I returned home I called at Mr. Dilly's for your *Farrago Double-distilled*; and on reading therein the contempt cast on my insignificant name, I adored the kind Providence which brought me so seasonably under the sound of such a scripture, and which impressed it so deeply on my heart.

But permit me to ask, sir, by what laws you are authorized to insult a person who never injured you? Not by the laws of God; not by the precepts of Christianity. For these teach you not to 'render evil for evil, or railing.' But your conduct, sir, has been the reverse of this, for you have rendered evil to one of whom you cannot say that he has injured you so much as in thought. You have railed on him while he was 'dumb, and opened not his mouth.' You know, sir, who hath said, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.' Now, have you done this in the present case? Consider, honoured sir, have you, in mentioning my name, been as careful not to load it with public contempt as you would that I should be in mentioning yours?

Perhaps you will wonder that I animadvert so freely on the conduct of a person of your consequence in making any use of my name which you think proper. But permit me to tell

you, sir, that my name is as sacred to me as yours is to you. And permit me to tell you farther, that if the inequality which subsists between us was a thousand times greater than it is, you would have no more right to insult me than I should have to insult you. And permit me to tell you once more that if you were the greatest peer of the realm, and I the poorest peasant, the laws of God and of my country would authorize me to call you to an account for every insult offered to my character, either as a fellow creature or as an Englishman.

As to that reputation which arises from an honourable birth, an early education, a plentiful fortune, and a respectable employment, you are rich: you have flocks and herds in great abundance. But as for me, if I possess one scrap of credit in the world, it is only as a single lamb, bought with my own industry, nursed at my own expense and with much toil and patience, and which, after all, is so small and feeble that it can scarce be seen or heard among all the mighty flocks which adorn your ample plains.

Now, sir, what was the reason that you, a man of such abundance, should endeavour to rob me of my little all?

Mr. Olivers's affection for his father and friend Mr. Wesley was strong and uninterrupted. He not only defended the character of that eminent man against the slanderous attacks of the Messrs. Hill and Toplady, but also against those of the Rev. Caleb Evans.

In 1791 Mr. Olivers poured out the sorrows of

his heart in 'A Descriptive and Plaintive Elegy on the Death of the late Rev. John Wesley.' It is headed by a quotation from Milton's *Paradise Lost* :

> Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
> The better fight,

and has eighty-two stanzas. We must content ourselves by quoting the following lines :

As those stood weeping by, who raised his head,
And did what could be done around his bed,
He saw their toil and care, and thanked their great good-will,
And cried, ' 'Tis best of all, that God is with us still.'

That ' God is with us still ' he thrice declared,
And thrice looked up, and saw his vast reward ;
Then cried, ' Through Jesu's blood the holiest place I gain ' ;
And strove to raise his voice, and sung his favourite strain :

> ' I'll praise my Maker while I've breath ;
> And when my voice is lost in death,
> Praise shall employ my nobler powers.'

The night for ever fled, the morn appeared,
Which brought the signs of woe we long had feared.
He hailed the happy day, and then triumphant cried,
' I'll praise !—I'll praise !—Farewell ! ' then closed his eyes and died.

He urges all his friends :

Let us unite in one, and strive with mutual care
To help his children on, and all their burdens bear.

For this let us, like him, the world disdain ;
For this, like him, rejoice in toil and pain ;
Like him, be bold for God ; like him, our time redeem ;
And strive, and watch, and pray ; and live and die like him .

Olivers's Obituary is in the *Minutes of Conference* for 1799. 'Thomas Olivers, who died advanced in years. In his younger days he was a zealous, able and useful travelling preacher, but for a considerable part of his life he was employed by Mr. Wesley as the corrector of his press. His talents were very considerable, and his attachment to Mr. Wesley and the cause of Methodism was fully evidenced by several masterly publications.'

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